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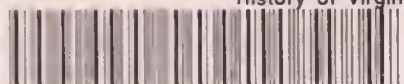


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HISTORY
OF
VIRGINIA

VOLUME III
VIRGINIA SINCE 1861

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ILLUSTRATED

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TO

My Father

JOHN ROBERT MORTON (1854-1923)

A GENTLEMAN OF OLD VIRGINIA, WHO CONTRIBUTED
HIS SHARE OF LABOR AND OF SACRIFICE IN
BUILDING A NEW COMMONWEALTH

THIS BOOK
IS DEDICATED IN LOVING
MEMORY

PREFACE

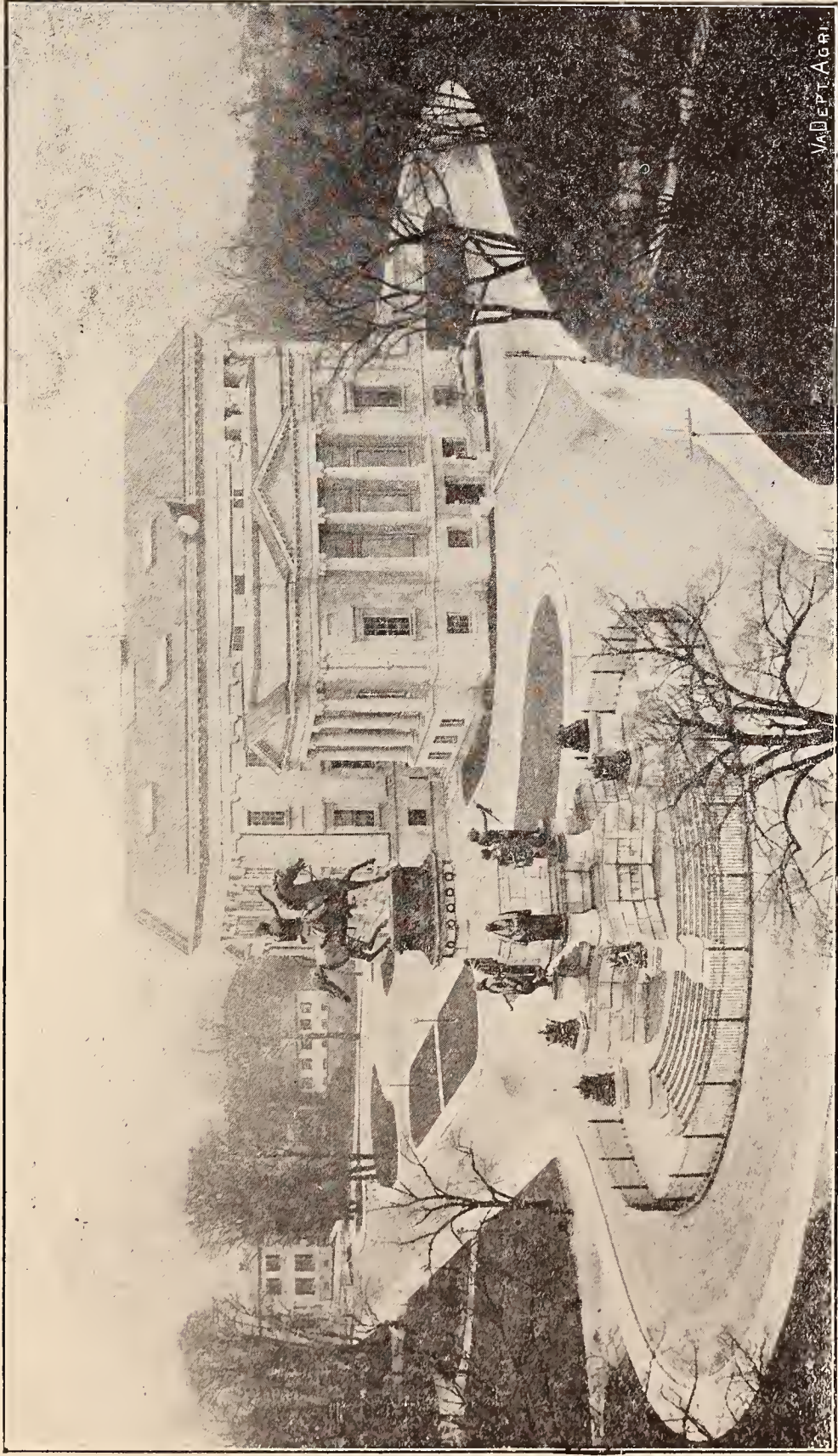
In relating the history of Virginia since 1861, within the brief compass of this volume, it has been my purpose to lead the reader along those highways which give visions of the past, make clearer the present, and point the way to the future. But I have often found it hard to resist the temptation of straying into the byways and hedges with alluring incidents and anecdotes, which would be well worth recording.

I wish to make recognition of the fact that Dr. Alfred J. Morrison of Virginia, an experienced and capable historical scholar, had been chosen to write this volume, but death stopped his work. The duty devolving upon the editor-in-chief to provide for this volume, Dr. Bruce induced me to undertake the work. The volume is the result exclusively of my labors, both in collection of materials and in composition, and I assume the full responsibility for its authorship.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Editor of the series, Dr. Philip Alexander Bruce for his consideration and encouragement; my wife, Estelle Dinwiddie Morton, and two of my students in the College of William and Mary, Miss Helen Berlin and Miss Katherine Kerr, for their great aid in preparing the manuscript for the publishers. I also wish to thank the many people of the State Library, the Library of the College of William and Mary, and the University of Virginia Library, and in the state departments of Richmond, for their courtesy and aid. The Department of Agriculture and Immigration, through Assistant Commissioner, Mr. J. J. Owen, made available to the publishers many interesting photographs.

RICHARD L. MORTON.

Williamsburg, Virginia.
December 11, 1923.



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STATE CAPITOL AND WASHINGTON MONUMENT, RICHMOND

HISTORY OF VIRGINIA

VOLUME III

CHAPTER I

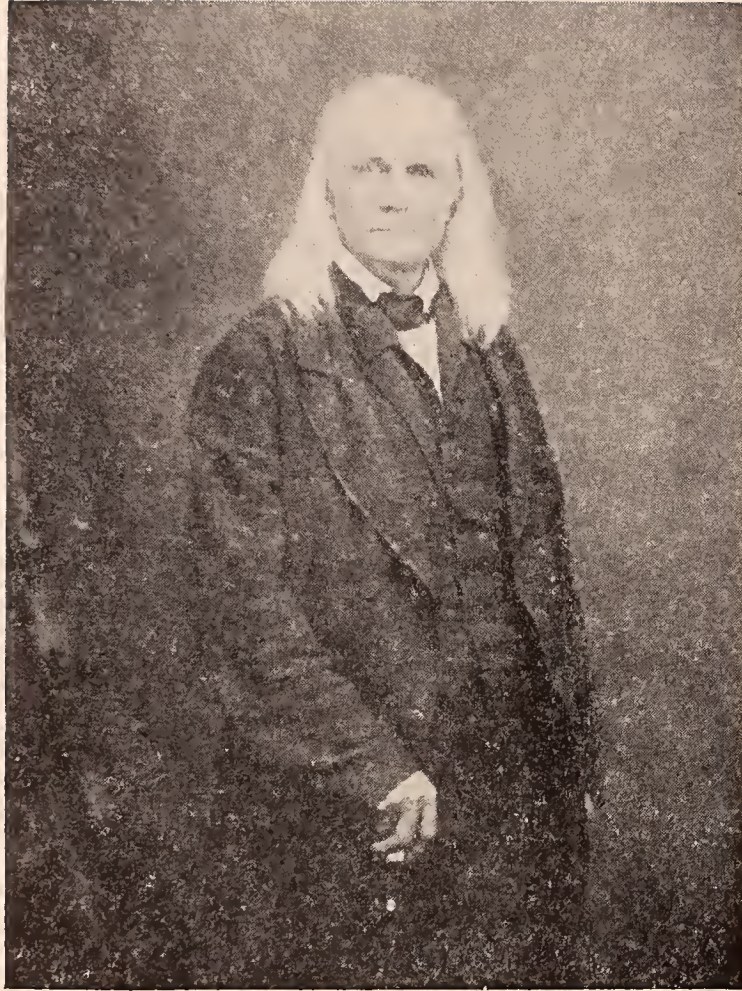
THE WAR OF SECESSION

The firing on Fort Sumter, at four-thirty in the morning of Friday, April 12, 1861, was the signal for the beginning of four long years of war, and many more years of readjustment, more bitter than war itself. The *Richmond Dispatch* of Saturday, April 13, carried the headline, "THE WAR COMMENCED—FIRING ON FORT SUMTER BEGUN." Among the troops of South Carolina was a "grey-haired volunteer from Virginia," Edmund Ruffin. Another distinguished Virginian, Roger A. Pryor, had offered his services to South Carolina. In a speech to a throng of serenaders who, one night, surrounded the Charleston Hotel, where he was staying, he said, "As sure as tomorrow's sun will rise upon us, just so sure will Old Virginia be a member of the Southern Confederation. And I will tell you, Gentlemen, what will put her in the Southern Confederation in less than an hour by Shrewsbury's clock. Strike a blow! * * * The very moment that blood is shed, Old Virginia will make common cause with her sisters of the South. It is impossible she should do otherwise."¹

The news of the surrender of Fort Sumter occasioned great excitement throughout Virginia. A news item of a Richmond²

¹*Richmond Dispatch*, April 13, 1861.

²*Richmond Dispatch*, April 15, 1861.



EDMUND RUFFIN

paper states that, in the capital city, "Saturday night, April 14, the offices of the *Dispatch*, *Enquirer*, and *Examiner*, the banking house of Enders, Sutton and Co., the Edgmont House, and sundry other public and private places, testified to the general joy by brilliant illuminations. Hardy less than 10,000 persons were on Main Street, between Eighth and Fourteenth, at one time. Speeches were delivered at the Spottswood House, at the *Dispatch* corner, in front of the *Enquirer* office, at the Exchange Hotel, and at other places. Bonfires were lighted at nearly every corner of every principal street in the city, and the light of beacon fires could be seen burning on Union and Church Hills."

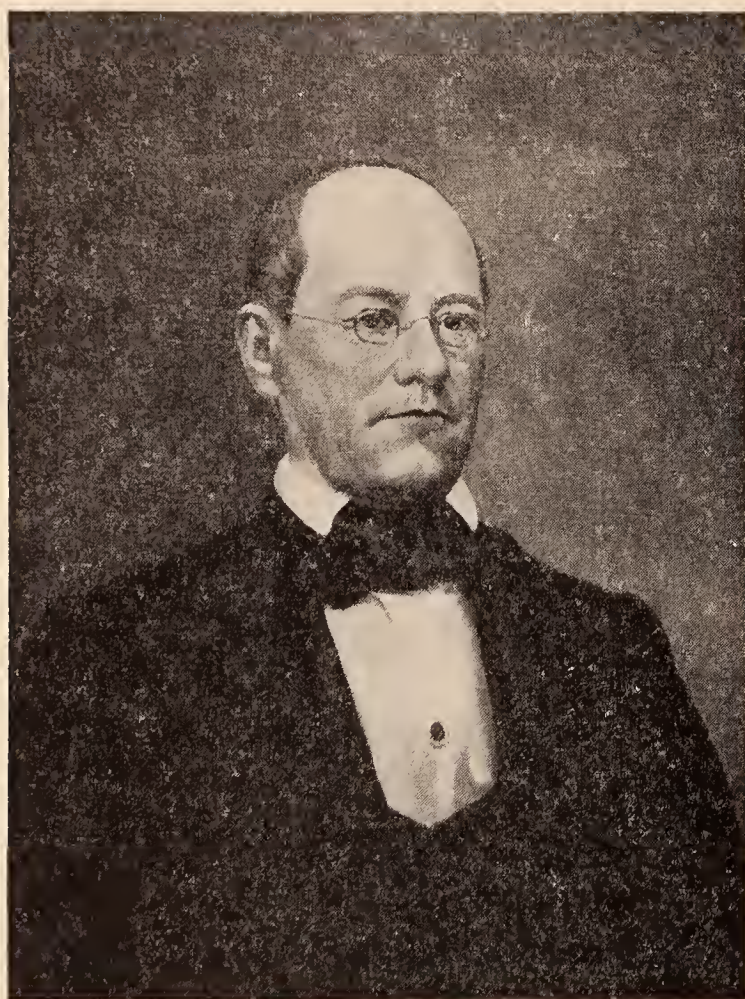
The bands played "Dixie" and "La Marseillaise." There were similar demonstrations throughout the chief cities of the state.

On that day, William Ballard Preston, Alexander H. H. Stuart and George W. Randolph, who had been sent on April 8 by the Virginia Convention as commissioners to Lincoln to ascertain his policy in regard to the seceded states, returned with the report that the President had said that, if it were true that Fort Sumter had been fired upon, he would meet force with force.³

On the same day, April 15, upon which these commissioners gave their report, the convention received the news of the President's proclamation calling on the states of the Union for troops. It was this call for Virginia soldiers to coerce the Southern States that threw Virginia into the Confederacy. Virginia did not leave the Union because South Carolina struck the blow at Sumter. There were still enough cool-headed men in Virginia to have prevented secession had she not been called upon to coerce her sister states. In answer to the Secretary of War, through whom the proclamation had come, Governor Letcher wrote to Secretary Cameron April 16, 1861:

"In reply to this communication, I have only to say, that the militia of Virginia will not be furnished to the powers at

³Richmond *Dispatch*, April 15, 1861.



JOHN LETCHER
Governor 1860-1864

Washington for any such use or purpose as they have in view. Your object is to subjugate the Southern States; and a requisition made upon me for such an object—an object, in my judgment, not within the purview of the Constitution, or the Act of 1795—will not be complied with. You have chosen to inaugurate civil war, and having done so, we will meet it in a spirit as determined as the Administration has exhibited towards the South.’”⁴

On the day after the dispatch of this letter, Governor Letcher issued a proclamation instructing all armed volunteer regiments or companies within the State to hold themselves in readiness for immediate orders. He was preparing to resist coercion by the Federal Government. The Virginia Convention had been in session nearly two months earnestly considering the state of the Union and the question of secession. After the formation of the Southern Confederacy, the border states were isolated. Virginia had hoped that her position between the two hostile groups would enable her to act as a mediator. After President Lincoln’s call for troops Virginia was forced to abandon this position and to join her forces with one side or the other. There could be but one choice. The people felt that the Union had already been dissolved by the seceding states, and that Lincoln had now made all hope of reconstructing the Union impossible. Would Virginia remain in the Northern Confederation or join the Southern Confederation? They were bound to the people of the Southern States not only by economic and social ties but also by ties of kinship. One has only to look at the family histories of Virginians to see what a steady stream of emigrants went south and southwest from Virginia during the half century before 1860. They must either throw in their lot with their neighbors and kinsmen or fight them in company with a government controlled by “black republicans” and abolitionists who had lost no opportunity to abuse them and injure them.

⁴Richmond *Dispatch*, April 18, 1861.

There was no surprise, therefore, at the secession of Virginia. The convention, late in the night of April 17, passed the Ordinance of Secession—Virginia's second Declaration of Independence:

“The people of Virginia recognize the American principle, that government is founded on the consent of the governed, and the right of the people of the several states of this Union, for just cause, to withdraw from their association under the Federal Government with the people of the other states, and to erect new governments for their better security; and they never will consent that the Federal power, which is, in part, their power, shall be exerted for the purpose of subjecting the people of such states to the Federal authority.”

The ordinance was adopted by a vote of one hundred and three to forty-six. It was to be valid if ratified by a vote of the people on the fourth Thursday in May. On May 23, it was ratified by a vote of 125,950 to 20,373. Of the votes cast against it, the majority came from the northwestern counties.

The people of the State, like their ancestors who had fought under Washington, desired independence from a government under which they could no longer feel secure or happy. With them the spirit of '61 was a revival of the spirit of '76.

The Ordinance of Secession ended the long period of suspense which had followed Lincoln's election on November 6, 1860. During that period, the desire for secession had only become stronger when it was realized that there could be no middle ground in the approaching conflict. The reaction that came with the knowledge that at last a decision had been reached brought great joy. The news of the action of the convention appeared in the morning papers and was received with jubilation throughout the State. The night of April 19 was set aside by the people of Richmond for a great illumination in honor of independence. The scene described below by an eye-witness of those days, is typical of others in both sections of the country. It was a gala night. There was no thought of war; only of independence.

“As far as the eye could reach down the line of Franklin Street, over the hill, more than a mile distant, glared the torches; and the dim transparencies shone like illuminated squares of vapor, or gigantic fire-flies; the sounds of musical instruments growing fainter and fainter, until they were lost upon the ear, or drowned in the hum of the multitude, which now and then burst forth into the wildest hurrahs. It was impossible to mistake the sentiment which possessed the soul of the assemblage. It was not the result of a sudden ebullition of excitement, but a real emotion, long cherished.”⁵

Those who participated in this outburst of feeling did not know that President Lincoln on that very day had issued an order for the blockading of Southern ports—the beginning of the slow strangling of the South. On the same day a crowd of secessionists disputed the passage of Federal troops through Baltimore. It resulted in several casualties.

The days of preparation for war were full of excitement. People seldom count the cost of war until the days of reckoning which follow. It is a sad commentary on human nature that wars are usually begun with a light heart.

The state authorities did not await the result of the popular vote on the ratification of the Ordinance of Secession, but assuming for good reasons that the vote would be in the affirmative, hastened to join the Southern Confederacy. Upon receiving a telegram from Governor Letcher asking for an alliance with the Confederacy, President Davis sent Vice President Alexander H. Stephens to Richmond. A military alliance was negotiated. Virginia was admitted into the Confederacy on May 7, and on May 21 the capital of the Confederate States was moved from Montgomery, Alabama, to Richmond.⁶

Recruits assembled from Virginia and from all parts of the

⁵Eighty-six years before, on April 19, the first blood was shed on Lexington green in another war of independence.

⁶The Virginia Convention had on April 27 invited the Confederacy to make Richmond its capital.

Confederacy, and a city of tents appeared in the fields outside of Richmond. The raw recruits were put through the school of the soldier by young cadets under supervision of older officers. All hands turned to preparation for war. The women organized sewing societies. They cut bandages and prepared lint for the wounded. They not only made lighter articles, such as socks and shirts, but also heavier stuff, jackets and overcoats, and tents from sail-cloth. Many stiff and swollen fingers testified to their determination and industry. These busy fingers made up in large part for the lack of manufacturers of clothing in the South. The first flurry of excitement over the approach of the enemy occurred on Sunday, the 21st of April. Notice had been given that a bell in Capitol Square would be rung should there be any emergency requiring the services of the soldiers who might be attending the churches throughout the city. On that morning while the churches were filled with worshippers the bell rang and the men hastened to their respective posts. The report that the Federal gunboat *Pawnee* was threatening the city had caused the sudden excitement. Troops and guns were hurried down the river; and as twilight began to settle the sound of cannon was heard. The alarm was false, however, and the cannon fire was not directed at a Federal ship, but at some object in the river with the purpose of fixing the range. This day was long remembered in Richmond as the "Pawnee Sunday."

The first invasion of Virginia by Federal troops was the occupation of Alexandria on May 24, 1861. It was done secretly and at night and some Confederate cavalry troops were surprised and taken captive. At early dawn a Federal officer saw above the Marshall House a large Confederate flag. With four companions he climbed a ladder, took down the flag and was returning through the house when he met Mr. Jackson, the keeper of the hotel. "This is my trophy," said the officer, pointing to the flag. "And you are mine," answered Jackson as he shot him dead. Jackson, in turn, was instantly

killed. This was the first bloodshed on Virginia soil in defense of the flag.

Governor Letcher's call for volunteers met with a ready response. In less than two months after secession, Virginia had at least 40,000 troops in the field.⁷ They were coming to the camps faster than they could be armed. A state navy was organized. By the 16th of November, 1861, Virginia had expended more than \$6,000,000 for war purposes. Prices had already begun to rise. In June, 1861, the Confederate Government took over the military forces of the several states. Governor Letcher protested vigorously against this usurpation of the rights of the sovereign states as unconstitutional; but he counseled his people to obey the order for the period of the emergency and to settle such questions later.⁸

A few days after Virginia had left the Union, many of her sons who were in the service of the United States army and navy returned to the State. Of the five generals in the Federal army, four were from the South. Two of these were from Virginia. The commander-in-chief of the army was a Virginian. From the same state came the three commanders in command of the forces in Texas, New Mexico, and Utah; the Surgeon General, the Judge Advocate General, the Assistant Judge Advocate General, the acting Commissary General, and the Quartermaster General.⁹

As war became imminent the command of the armies of the United States was offered to another Virginian, Colonel Robert E. Lee, who had distinguished himself for his bravery and ability as an officer of engineers in General Scott's army during the Mexican war, and who had been conspicuous for his skill as an engineer in the service of the War Department since that time. Colonel Lee loved the Union and had no illusions as to the future of the South in a war of secession. He

⁷*Documents of Virginia Convention*, 1861, Nos. 35, 36, 37; *Documents, House of Delegates*, 1861-1862, Doc. No. 49.

⁸*Message of the Governor with accompanying documents*, extra session, 1862; message of May 5, 1862.

⁹*Richmond Dispatch*, July 23, 1860.

realized that, in leaving the Federal army, he was giving up the opportunity of attaining the highest honor that he could receive in his profession. He dedicated his services to his native state in this hour of crisis out of a spirit of loyalty to that state. He was moved by a fine sense of honor and of duty. It was to him a war to repel invasion and to win independence. To him the cause was as deserving of success as that to which Washington had dedicated his life. The Virginians who fought under his command shared these lofty motives.

"I can contemplate," he said, "no greater calamity for the country than a dissolution of the Union—and I am willing to sacrifice everything but honor for its preservation. However, a union that can only be maintained by swords and bayonets, and in which strife and civil war are to take the place of brotherly love and kindness, has no charm for me. I shall mourn for my country and the progress of mankind. If the Union is dissolved, and the government is disrupted, I shall return to my native state and share the misery of my people, and save in their defense will draw my sword no more."

In these words Robert E. Lee expressed the feeling of his fellow Virginians, except that they were doubtless more optimistic.

When Colonel Lee arrived at the Capital City on April 22, 1861, he was met and escorted to the Spottswood Hotel by the state adjutant-general and others. A large crowd awaited him and called upon him for a speech. With his usual reluctance in making public speeches he responded in a few words that he was there to do his duty for his state. Upon hearing that Lee had resigned his commission in the Federal army, Governor Letcher had placed him in command of the Virginia troops. He had come to enter upon his new duties.

On the day after his arrival in Richmond, he was called before the Virginia Convention and received his commission as commander-in-chief of the forces of Virginia, from the hands of its aged president, John Janney.

Lee set to work at once with great energy to organize the



GENERAL LEE ON HIS HORSE TRAVELLER

raw recruits into an army and to make the State secure against invasion. Firearms and other weapons of every available kind were gathered. Among the military supplies were some which have now become extinct—many flint lock rifles, some gallons of whiskey, etc. Harper's Ferry and Gosport Navy Yard, with their supplies, were seized, and the numerous rivers which reach far into the State were fortified against Federal gunboats.

When the Confederate Government assumed control of the troops of Virginia in June, 1861, Lee was one of the five generals appointed by the Confederate Congress, and was chosen as military adviser to President Davis. In this capacity, he made plans which brought victory to the Confederate army at Manassas.

The first battle of the war between organized forces had already taken place in Western Virginia. This region, cut off by mountains from ready communication with Eastern Virginia, fell an easy prey to the Federal arms.¹⁰

The Confederates were defeated in several small battles. After the battle of Carricks Ford (July 14, 1861), in which the Confederate general, Robert S. Garnett, was killed and his army defeated, General McClellan, who commanded the Federal troops, telegraphed to Washington, "Our success is complete and secession is killed in this country." The triumph of the Federal armies in Western Virginia made possible the organization of the revolutionary "Restored Government" of Virginia, which brought into the Union the state of West Virginia.

On June 10, 1861, a Federal army, under General Price, attacked a much smaller Confederate force of Virginia and North Carolina troops, under General J. B. Magruder, at Bethel Church, a few miles from Hampton, Virginia. The assault was repulsed. It was an insignificant victory, but it

¹⁰The Baltimore and Ohio was the only railroad traversing this section of Virginia.

gave the Confederates some encouragement after their defeats in Western Virginia.

After Richmond became the capital of the Confederate States of America the cry of the North of "On to Richmond" became increasingly persistent. From the very first of the war, the Federals had held two doors opening into Virginia. McDowell had taken Alexandria, and Butler was holding Fortress Monroe, which was too strongly fortified to be seized by Virginia troops at the outbreak of the war.

Virginia's position as the chief border state, in threatening proximity to the Federal Government, and defending the Confederate capital, made her the pathway and the battlefield of opposing armies throughout the war. Dr. Philip Alexander Bruce calls attention to the fact that the Confederacy blundered in establishing its capital at Richmond, a place close to the chief Federal base and open to attacks from almost every side. By the transfer of the seat of government to Richmond, General Lee's military career was destined to become associated with the eastern theatre of warfare alone, instead of with the western, where the successes of the army of Northern Virginia, unhampered by the vulnerableness of Richmond and the necessity of holding it, would, in all probability, have secured the independence of the southern states.¹¹

During July Federal armies were threatening Virginia from the passes of the northwestern mountains; down the Shenandoah from Harper's Ferry, which the Confederates had abandoned; along the Alexandria and Orange Railroad from Alexandria; and up the Peninsula from Fortress Monroe. Four Confederate armies containing a total of 65,000 men were placed to resist these invasions—Johnston with 15,000 men in the Valley; Beauregard at Manassas with 20,000; Huger at Norfolk, and Magruder at Yorktown with a combined force of 17,000; Holmes, with 8,000, at Aquia Creek; and Garnett, with 5,000, in Western Virginia.¹²

¹¹Bruce, *Lee*, pp. 108-109.

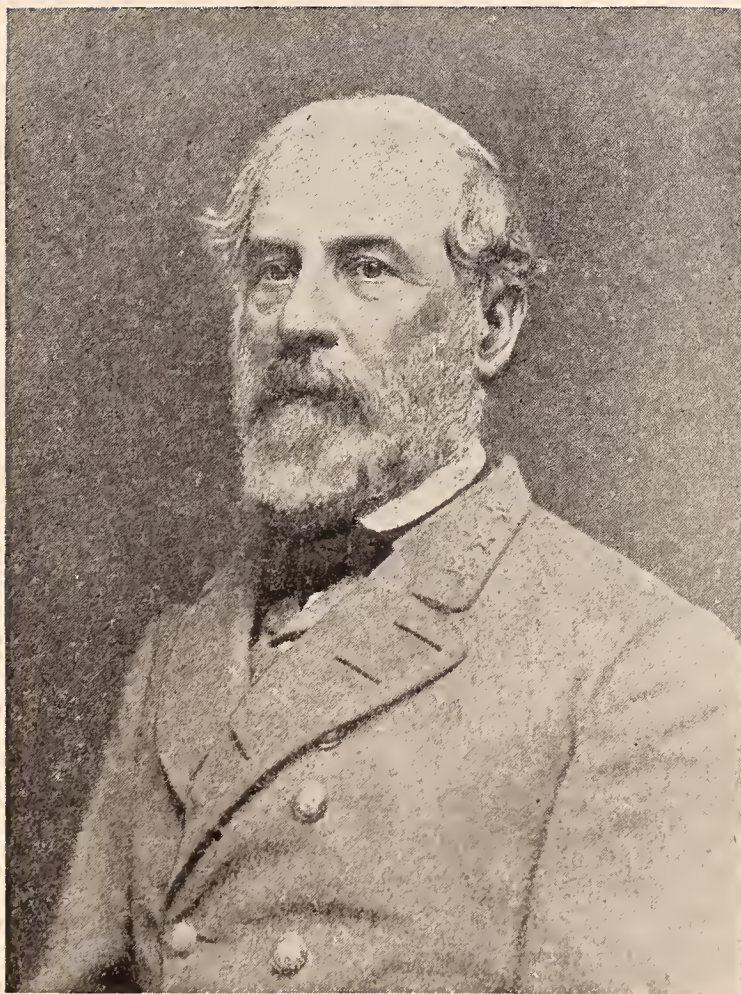
¹²Bruce, *Lee*, p. 110.

These armies stood on the defensive. It soon became evident that the Federals had decided to attack first at Manassas, where General Beauregard's army was guarding the junction of the Alexandria and Orange Railroad with the Manassas Gap Railroad, which formed his line of communication with Johnston in the Valley near Winchester.¹³

General McDowell, the Union leader south of the Potomac, was ordered to attack Beauregard, while General Patterson, with about 22,000 men, would defeat Johnston or hold him in check in order to prevent his union with Beauregard. McDowell was an officer of ability and experience, who had served as a staff officer during the Mexican war. His "Grand Army" of 30,000, like the army opposed to him, was composed almost entirely of raw recruits. By Saturday, July 20, this army had covered the interval of twenty-seven miles and faced Beauregard's troops across the little river of Bull Run. Johnston's army, which was ordered to Manassas, successfully eluded Patterson. By July 20, Johnston, with 6,000 of his troops, joined Beauregard. On the next day, Sunday, July 21, McDowell attacked. He surprised and turned the Confederates' left wing and rolled it back to a small plateau. Here the retreating forces under General Bee saw Thomas J. Jackson's brigade quietly awaiting attack. "There," cried General Bee, "is Jackson standing like a stone-wall." Thus was Jackson baptized with a new name which was hardly characteristic of the brilliant offensive qualities which he displayed in later battles and campaigns.

The Federal troops drove the Confederates from the plateau. General Beauregard then rallied his soldiers and gave the Federals the bayonet. Once more they occupied the plateau. But the Federals also rallied, and again the Confederates were driven back. McDowell was sure of victory, and Jefferson Davis, arriving at Manassas on the train from Richmond, was told that Beauregard's army had been defeated. The conductor refused to take the train any further. But

¹³See map in Rhodes, *Civil War*, p. 158.



GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE

upon the insistence of President Davis the locomotive was detached and he was conveyed to headquarters, where he found horses and guides to carry him to the field of battle. Stragglers told him that he would go forward only at the risk of his safety. Upon reaching the battlefield, Johnston gave him the cheerful news of victory. The Federals had driven the Confederates from the Henry plateau into the woods beyond for the second time, and felt confident of victory. Beauregard, however, gathered up all his strength and reformed his line for a final attempt to reconquer the plateau. At this moment cheers were heard from a distance and news came that Johnston had brought up the remainder of his army. Word was also passed down the line of the exhausted Federal troops that Johnston's troops had come. As the Confederates moved forward, the Federals, who had been fighting bravely enough through the heat of a July day, were seized with a panic and fled from the battlefield. Although the Confederates followed only a short distance, the Federal soldiers did not cease their headlong flight until they had reached the shelter of their fortifications at Washington.

News of this victory greatly encouraged the people of the State. But there were no bonfires, processions, firing of guns and speech-making, such as had greeted the news of Sumter and secession. War had come with its tragedies, and the whole people were fighting with a sober realization of the suffering ahead of them.

Unfortunately, the Confederates did not follow up their victory, and McClellan, who had assumed command of the Federal army, began to build up a large, well-equipped and well-trained force.

In the early summer of 1861, General Lee was given the task of driving the Federal army out of Western Virginia. But his campaign there ended in failure. The Federal hold was strong, and the difficulties in the way of the Confederates proved unsurmountable even to the genius of Lee. A rugged country, occupied by a people, many of whom were hostile or

indifferent to the Confederate cause, and already in the hands of the enemy; lack of facilities of communication with Eastern Virginia; heavy rains and muddy roads; sickness and insufficient food among the men and the draught animals; jealousies between the officers and lack of morale among the soldiers, these obstacles prevented General Lee from regaining possession of Western Virginia.

From July, 1861, when the Battle of Manassas was fought, to March, 1862, nothing of importance occurred in the eastern theatre of the war. Federal troops were left in control of the Western Virginia counties. General Lee was building coast defenses south of Virginia, which were so skillfully constructed that they were only captured when attacked from the rear by General Sherman's army marching up the coast; McClellan was drilling 150,000 men at Washington; while Frémont was stationed in Western Virginia with 30,000 men, and Banks, in the Shenandoah Valley with about 30,000 more. The Confederate government could only muster 60,000 poorly armed troops to meet these forces which hung like storm clouds on the horizon.

While the tempest was gathering the first conflict between ironclad war ships occurred in Hampton Roads. When Norfolk and Portsmouth were evacuated in April, 1861, the navy yard, and the vessels which could not be taken away, were destroyed. One of these vessels, which had been dismantled and burned to the water-line, was the *Merrimac*, a steam frigate commissioned in 1855. She was said to represent "the best type of warship then known." The Confederate navy department built upon the hull of the *Merrimac* an iron-clad floating battery and rechristened her the *Virginia*. It was covered with a roof placed at an angle of forty-five degrees. This roof was 170 feet long, and was built of twenty-inch heart pine timbers covered with four inches of oak. Upon this were bolted two layers of iron plates, each two inches thick, giving an armor plate four inches thick. These plates were bolted through the two feet of wood beneath them.

There was an iron prow, six feet long, below the water-line, which served as a ram. She carried ten guns. Commodore Franklin Buchanan of Maryland was in command, with Lieutenant Catesby R. Jones of Virginia second in command. The crew consisted of 350 men, most of whom had volunteered from the army.

Saturday, March 8, 1862, was beautifully clear and calm. About noon of that day the *Virginia* left the wharf at the navy yard and steamed slowly down the Elizabeth River. She was saluted by the batteries and cheered by soldiers and civilians along the shore. Passing into Hampton Roads, she directed her course straight towards Newport News, where, blockading the James, lay anchored the Federal ships, the *Cumberland* and the *Congress*.

As the *Virginia* approached, several ships, anchored near Fortress Monroe at Old Point Comfort, started to the aid of their sister ships. One of these, the steam frigate *Minnesota*, grounded near Newport News Point. As the *Virginia* drew near, the *Congress* opened fire with a broadside upon her. This was followed by a broadside from the *Cumberland*, which slightly damaged the *Virginia*, killing one man and injuring several others. The *Virginia* reserved her fire until within easy range and used her bow rifle with terrible effect upon the *Cumberland*. When about fifty yards away, the *Virginia* slowed her engines and drove her ram into the side of the *Cumberland*, which sank with her colors flying and fighting to the end. The *Virginia* then moved up the James River, turned around, and steamed towards the *Congress*, which had run aground.

Running through a hail of shots, which bounded from her iron sides, the *Virginia* opened fire on this ship at two hundred yards. After a few shots the *Congress* became disabled and hoisted the white flag. The firing ceased. Officers of the *Virginia* boarded the *Congress*, and preparations were under way for the removing of the dead and wounded. While many of the *Virginia*'s men were on the open deck of the ship, the

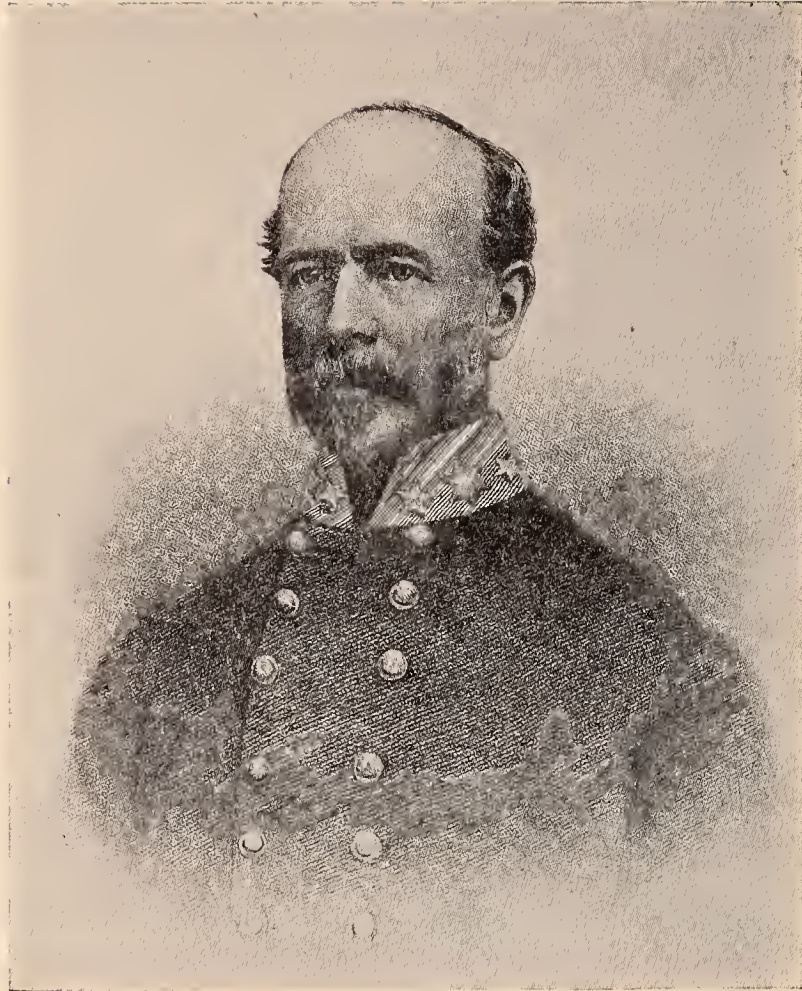
Federal shore batteries opened fire on the *Virginia*, through some error, wounding many, among whom was Commodore Buchanan. The command of the ship was now given to Lieutenant Jones, with instructions to clear the *Congress* and set her on fire with hot shot. This was done.

As darkness was approaching, the *Virginia* transferred her wounded to the naval hospital and anchored at Sewell's Point, hoping to finish the destruction of the grounded *Minnesota* the next day. But in the night another iron-clad, the *Monitor*, had come into Hampton Roads to confront the *Virginia*. The two strange crafts met the next morning, Sunday, March 9. The battle lasted for about two hours. At one time the *Virginia*, which was very hard to manœuver in shallow water, went aground for fifteen minutes. During this time she received the combined fire of the *Minnesota* and the *Monitor*. At times the two vessels were firing into each other at close range, but the heavy shells bounded from their iron sides with little effect. As a last resort, the *Virginia* attempted to run down the *Monitor*. The blow was a glancing one, however, and unsuccessful. In a short while, a shot from the *Virginia* blinded the captain of the *Monitor*, and that vessel withdrew to shallow water out of reach of the *Virginia*.

The exploits of the *Virginia* had been remarkable, but her days were numbered. After remaining in dry-dock for about a month, she made two more excursions into Hampton Roads, but was not attacked. She was finally blown up to prevent capture when the Confederates retreated up the Peninsula before McClellan in 1862.

This short cruise of the *Virginia* put an end to the wooden battleships of the world. They are now as much out of date in warfare as bows and arrows have been since the advent of firearms.

The early part of 1862 was a gloomy period in the history of the Confederacy. Aid from abroad seemed more distant than ever since the settlement of the Mason and Slidell affair in the previous autumn. In the West, Grant took Fort Henry



GENERAL J. E. JOHNSTON

and Fort Donelson—the beginning of the separation of the western part of the Confederacy from the eastern. In Virginia, Joseph E. Johnston was ordered to fall back across the Rappahannock and there to await the advance of the mighty army of McClellan, the “young Napoleon.” It was at this time (March, 1862) that General Lee became once more President Davis’s military adviser, having control over all battle areas.

During April, McClellan with 100,000 men was besieging Yorktown, which Johnston held with an army of about half that number. It was a long wait for the Confederates. They built for themselves comfortable huts, fortified their position, and settled down for a month’s siege. Thousands of sandbags used in the fortifications had been made by the wives, daughters and sisters of these soldiers. The delay seemed still longer for the patient Lincoln, who wrote his general: “I think you had better break the enemy’s line at once.” McDowell’s army of 35,000 men was moving south from Washington still more cautiously for fear of an attack on the Federal capital. It was his plan to unite with McClellan near Richmond. Banks was in the Valley, and Frémont in Western Virginia.

On May 3, Johnston evacuated Yorktown and retreated slowly up the Peninsula between the James and the York. McClellan followed cautiously. On May 5, a battle took place at Williamsburg, where the Union army pressed upon the retreating Confederates and was defeated. The battle lasted throughout the day and filled the churches and the college buildings with wounded. On May 24, the day on which Farragut fought his way through the forts guarding New Orleans and seized that city, McClellan’s army of 105,000 men was encamped upon the Chickahominy River within about seven miles of Richmond. A few days earlier, May 15, Federal gunboats, including the celebrated *Monitor*, were defeated by the Confederate batteries at Drewry’s Bluff eight miles below Richmond. Richmond was saved the fate of

New Orleans by the lack of aggressiveness on the part of McClellan, by the strategy of Lee and Jackson, and by the good generalship of Johnston.

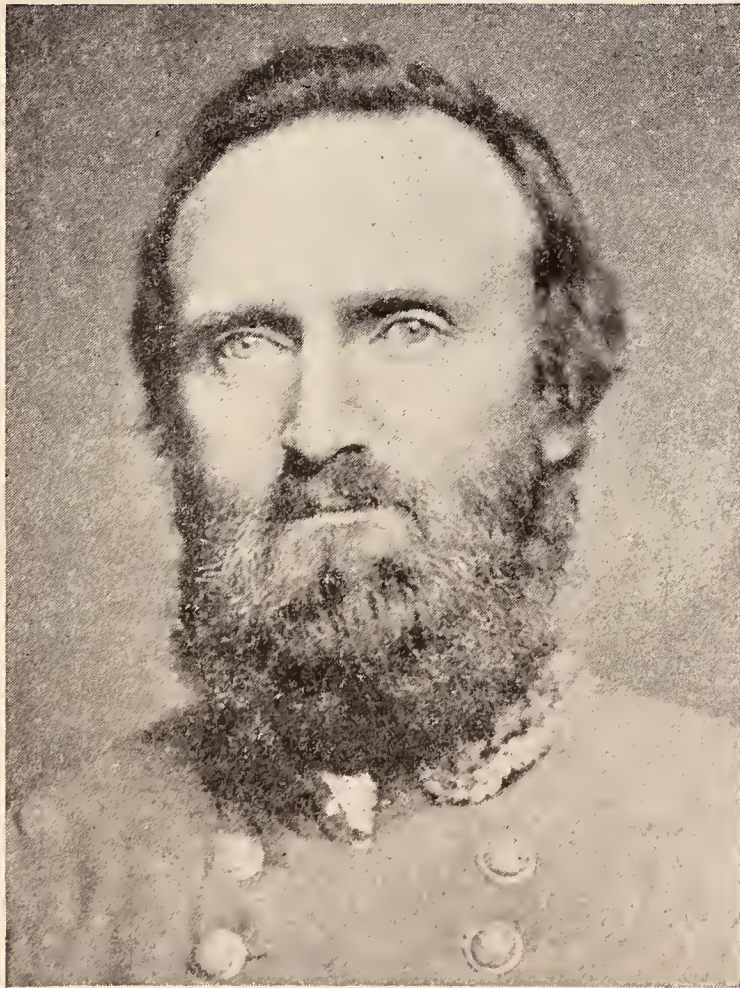
Early in the campaign Lee determined that the Federal armies of 200,000 men should be prevented from combining under McClellan. He had urged Jackson to create a diversion as early as April 21.¹⁴ On May 16 he wrote to Jackson, "Whatever movement you make against Banks, do it speedily, and if successful, drive him back toward the Potomac and create the impression as far as possible that you design to threaten that line."

Lee was sending these orders to one thoroughly competent to carry them out. Jackson had already begun his famous Valley campaign. On May 8 he struck a part of Frémont's army at McDowell, and his dispatch to Richmond was: "God blessed our arms with victory at McDowell yesterday." He then rejoined Ewell, whom he had left at Swift Run Gap with the remainder of the Confederate troops to watch Banks.

In writing of Jackson, an English officer, Lieutenant-Colonel G. F. R. Henderson, said that his soldiers "had seen him in action, the coolest of them all, riding along the line of battle with as much composure as if the hail of bullets was no more than summer rain. They had seen him far in advance of the charging lines cheering them to the pursuit. . . . He lived with his military family on the most intimate terms, and his unfailing courtesy, his utter absence of self-assertion, and his sweet temper were irresistible."

On May 23 Jackson suddenly fell upon a detachment of Banks's force at Front Royal, captured a large part of it, and put the remainder to flight. Banks, who was nearby at Strasburg, fearing that his retreat would be blocked, fell back in great haste towards Winchester, with Jackson at his heels. During the two days while these events were taking place, panic reigned at Washington. Lincoln ordered reinforcements to Banks at Winchester, sent Frémont to advance up

¹⁴Bruce, *Lee*, p. 132.



GENERAL STONEWALL JACKSON

the Valley and to strike Jackson in the rear, and ordered McDowell, who had been instructed to join McClellan, to give aid to Frémont. Lincoln was now more anxious to protect Washington than to capture Richmond.

But Jackson was just beginning to fight. On Sunday, May 25, he completely routed Banks at Winchester, captured a large amount of supplies, and drove the panic-stricken Federal army behind the shelter of the Potomac.

The force and rapidity of Jackson's attacks had convinced Secretary Stanton that large bodies of Confederate troops were marching on the capital. Regiments were hurried southward; in many of the states the militia and the home guards were called out; Lincoln took over the control of all the railroads in the country for military purposes; and he suggested to McClellan that it was about time for him to attack Richmond or come to the defense of Washington.

After accomplishing his purpose in drawing off reinforcements from McClellan, Jackson found himself threatened by Federal armies, which were hastening to cut off his retreat, and to crush him with superior forces. But he again outwitted and outmarched his enemies. On May 30 he fell back rapidly. Soon afterwards he was able to write: "I passed Strasburg before the Federal armies effected the contemplated junction in my rear." The Union troops continued to follow him until he turned, and, in two battles, he defeated them. With good strategy, he caused his enemies to believe that he was once more threatening Washington. Then he slipped out of the Valley to join the Confederate forces before Richmond.

During the forty-eight days of the campaign Jackson's army of 17,000 men had marched 676 miles; fought five arduous battles with successful results; had secured large quantities of military supplies; had mystified and defeated three Federal armies—a combined force of 50,000 men; had brought terror to the North; and had held back 40,000 troops from McClellan. "He now stood with army diminished,

indeed, but trained, seasoned, superb in morale, and eager for new efforts, while his own reputation was forever fixed as one of the world's great captains."¹⁵

Instead of taking advantage of the separation of Confederate forces during Jackson's diversion in the Valley, McClellan marked time before Richmond and sent urgent messages to Washington for reinforcements. His army was placed on both sides of the Chickahominy, a swampy river in a heavily forested region and crossed by only a few bridges. Two corps were on the south bank, and three on the north. On the night of May 30, a heavy rain turned the Chickahominy and its swamps into an impassable flood. Johnston, who had already planned to strike the divided Union army, hastened to attack the Federal troops under Keyes at Seven Pines, but the main assault was delayed by Longstreet until the afternoon. The Federal forces were routed and driven back to Fair Oaks, where they were reinforced by Heintzelman. There they made a new stand and held their ground until night ended the fighting. In the meantime Johnston directed in person the attack on the Federal left. But Sumner had by this time succeeded in crossing the Chickahominy and his arrival saved the Federal army. Johnston was severely wounded during the battle, and was forced to turn over the command to Gen. G. W. Smith. On the next day, June 1, General Smith continued the battle. Once more Longstreet delayed, and the Federal troops repulsed the Confederate attack.

On the afternoon of that day, General Lee arrived on the battlefield and took command of the disheartened army. Instead of continuing the attack on McClellan, he withdrew his army to the position occupied before the battle of Seven Pines. He next made his position secure by throwing up strong fortifications from Drewry's Bluff on the James River to New Bridge on the Chickahominy, and along the south bank of that river to Meadow Bridge. His skill as an engineer and as a master of men won the confidence and the affection

¹⁵J. K. Hosmer, *The Appeal to Arms*, p. 153.

of his soldiers, which he held in success and in defeat alike throughout the whole war.

During the next three weeks McClellan's army remained encamped along the Chickahominy. It had been reinforced by about 20,000 men. By the middle of June McClellan had removed all his army but one corps south of the Chickahominy. The time seemed ripe for his long promised attack on Richmond. The Federal pickets were within six miles of the city. The Union army could see the church spires and hear the church bells in the Confederate capital.

Lee, with his usual aggressiveness, did not wait for the attack. But he realized the hopelessness of assaulting the larger and well fortified army in front of him. He, therefore, laid his plans for attacking Fitz-John Porter's corps, which had been left north of the Chickahominy to protect the Federal line of communication along the York River Railroad, with their base on the York River. An assault here would allow the Confederates to strike the Federal army in detail and would break the Federal line of communications. In order to mislead his adversary, Lee had already sent two brigades to Jackson in the Valley. They conveyed to him the command to bring his army southward and to strike Porter's flank before McDowell could arrive. Stuart was sent with his cavalry to find out the exact position of McClellan's army. This gallant leader rode entirely around the Federal army, and reported to Lee that Porter's right flank was unprotected. Jackson was ordered to attack this flank secretly and suddenly. Lee, with the larger part of his forces, moved north of the Chickahominy, leaving Magruder with only 28,000 men between Richmond and the main lines of McClellan. It was a bold movement and ably executed.

At dawn on Thursday, June 26, the people of Richmond heard the sound of artillery. Fighting had begun only a few miles from the city. It continued throughout the day. This was the battle of Mechanicsville, the beginning of the Seven Days' Battle before Richmond. Porter had been forced to

fall back to Gaines' Mill. Early the next morning the booming of artillery could again be heard in Richmond. All that day the anxious inhabitants could catch to the east the noise of battle. In the late afternoon the noise grew fainter and that night those who waited received the welcome news that Porter's army, after a brave stand, had been forced beyond the Chickahominy. With the report of victory, however, there came long lines of dead and wounded that continued to arrive throughout this week of battles. During July, Richmond grew into a great hospital and burying ground.

The Federal army continued its retreat in the direction of Harrison's Landing on the James River. Had Lee's plans been successfully executed, the Federal army might have been crushed as it passed through White Oak Swamp. McClellan fought two rear guard actions with the Confederates at Savage's Station and at Frazer's Farm. On July 1 he occupied a strongly fortified position on Malvern Hill near the James River. Lee had planned a frontal attack upon this point with his full strength, and he had issued orders very reluctantly for the advance. Jackson, however, advised him to make a flank assault instead. Lee accepted the advice. But the order to advance was by some error not rescinded. The change of plans was not known in time to prevent 10,500 men from attacking without aid the whole power of the Union army. They fought with magnificent courage, but were forced back, with a loss of about 5,000 men, half their number.¹⁶

McClellan did not follow up this victory, but withdrew after dark to Harrison's Landing. This ended the Seven Days' Battle, which had lasted from June 25 to July 1. McClellan had managed to save his army, largely through Confederate errors, but he had lost to his opponent fifty-two pieces of artillery and large quantities of rifles and other war material. The campaign which he had planned and upon which great expectations had been built, had failed. He was now about twenty-five miles away from an objective which had

¹⁶Bruce, *Lee*, p. 149.

May 2, 1863

General,

The enemy has
made a stand at Chancellors
which is about 2 miles from
Chancellorsville. I hope as
soon as practicable to
attack.

I trust that an ever kind
Providence will bless us
with great success.

Respectfully

Genl R.E. Lee

T. J. Jackson
H. Genl

The lead division is up
& the rest two appear to
be well clothed.

T. J.

FACSIMILE OF JACKSON'S LAST MESSAGE TO LEE AT
CHANCELLORSVILLE

been almost within his grasp. He stood on the defensive, under shelter of his gunboats, with an army of splendid fighters vastly superior in number and equipment to that of his enemy. War is a battle of skill as well as of equipment and courage; and in skill McClellan was no match for Lee and Jackson.

After the failure of the Peninsula campaign, Halleck was made commander-in-chief of the Union forces, and Pope was placed at the head of the Army of Virginia, which was created out of the combined forces of McDowell, Frémont, and Banks.

Pope moved his army on to Gordonsville in order to cut the railroad leading from Richmond into the Valley, and to compel Lee to weaken his forces in front of McClellan. Lee's army was now between Federal forces numbering 80,000 and 50,000, respectively. He could not change his position while McClellan was still within a few miles of Richmond. In order to hasten action on the latter's part, Lee sent Jackson northward to strike detachments of Pope's army which were centering on Culpeper. Jackson advanced rapidly northward, pushing Banks aside at Cedar Mountain (August 9, 1862). Further advance was blocked by superior Union forces, and Jackson fell back upon Gordonsville to await Lee, who was now hastening to join him. In the meantime McClellan had been ordered to transfer his army to Aquia Creek, and Lee hoped to make an attack on Pope with his combined troops before McClellan could push forward overwhelming reinforcements.

As Lee, now united with Jackson, rapidly approached Culpeper, the unsuspecting Pope was warned by a spy that the Confederates were near. Much to Lee's disappointment that general, who boasted that he had only seen the backs of his enemy, and that his policy was always to attack, fell back rapidly across the Rappahannock. His position was now too well fortified for a frontal assault by Lee. If Lee were to try to turn his flank, Pope could detect the movement and withdraw still closer to Aquia Creek and reinforcements. The

opportunity of striking Pope's army before such reinforcements would arrive seemed hopeless. It would have been so if the Federal commander had been confronted by less skillful and daring commanders than Lee and Jackson. These leaders now decided to divide their army, leaving half in front of Pope's army and sending the other half in a swift and stealthy march through Thoroughfare Gap to the rear of the enemy. The latter half under Jackson would then hold Pope's army until Lee should arrive. In the early morning of August 25 Jackson's army began its march. The next day, passing through Thoroughfare Gap and around Pope's flank, it cut the Federal line of communication, seized or destroyed large quantities of supplies, and then withdrew to within twelve miles of Thoroughfare Gap, through which Lee's army was advancing. By skillful movements of his troops, Jackson succeeded in keeping Pope mystified as to his purposes, strength and location until Lee arrived.

The fight began July 29 on the old battle ground of Bull Run or Manassas. Pope deliberately walked into the trap set by Lee. His men fought valiantly but were cut to pieces by the Confederate cannon and rifle fire, which they were made to face. For two days Pope threw his men into one attack after another against Lee's breastworks. After the Federal forces had been weakened and disheartened by these futile assaults, Lee struck back with his whole army and drove his enemy in confusion from the field. Pope withdrew to Centreville, and finally to Alexandria. The prompt arrival of reinforcements most probably saved his army from destruction. This victory gave renewed evidence of the great offensive strategy of Lee when he had Jackson to aid him in its execution.

After Pope's defeat, he was relieved of command at his own request and his army was added to that of McClellan. Lee realized the futility of continually attacking vastly superior forces, and he, therefore, decided to carry the war into the enemy's country. He hoped in this way to draw the Fed-

eral forces out of Virginia; to receive fresh supplies of provisions and recruits for his army in Maryland; and to shorten the war by the moral effect of invasion of the North.

On September 3, Lee led his army northward and was soon in Maryland.¹⁷

Two days later McClellan left Washington to confront the invaders. Lee was compelled to divide his forces and send troops under Jackson to capture Harper's Ferry in order to open his line of communication into the Valley of Virginia. McClellan had found Lee's orders telling of the division of the Confederate army, and of the exact position of the several corps. His delay in taking advantage of this information allowed Lee time to bring his forces together on the banks of the Antietam at Sharpsburg, and Jackson was enabled to capture Harper's Ferry, with 12,520 prisoners, 13,000 small arms, and seventy-three pieces of artillery. He then hastened to join his chief at Sharpsburg. Here, with his back to the Potomac, Lee, with 35,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry and 194 pieces of artillery, faced McClellan's force of 87,164 men, with 276 guns.¹⁸

The battle started at sunrise on September 17, and continued with great fury throughout the day. The immediate victory was Lee's. He had been attacked and had repulsed his opponents. It was the bloodiest day of the Civil war. Lee remained on the battlefield the next day awaiting attack. Then hearing that McClellan was being heavily reinforced, he withdrew across the Potomac into Virginia, with no loss of men or material. McClellan had failed to make good his boast on finding Lee's order, "I have all the plans of the rebels and will catch them in their own trap." Like McClellan at Malvern Hill, Lee had saved his army in repulsing his enemy's assault; but his campaign had produced no important results. It was from the latter point of view a Federal victory.

¹⁷Kirby Smith and Bragg were also marching northward, threatening Cincinnati and Louisville.

¹⁸Bruce, *Lee*, p. 183.

While McClellan was reorganizing his forces north of the Potomac, Stuart took his cavalry entirely around the Federal army to find out if any portion of it was about to be sent against Richmond. There seemed to be no plan of that kind contemplated. By the end of October, McClellan had led his army across the Potomac to the vicinity of Warrenton, whence he planned to advance on Richmond. When Lee saw the direction in which his opponent was moving, he kept Jackson in the Valley, where he could menace McClellan's line of communication or threaten Washington; and he sent Longstreet to block the Federal advance at Culpeper, sixty miles from Jackson. By thus dividing his corps, he hoped to keep his opponents from combining all the Federal troops around Washington into an army of overwhelming power. Lee had arranged his own troops in such a way as to allow them to concentrate at Gordonsville with very little delay.

While McClellan was still at Warrenton, he was removed from command and Burnside was given his place. The new commander decided to make Aquia Creek his base of supplies and advance on Richmond from Fredericksburg. On December 13 he crossed the Rappahannock and attacked. The Confederate army was well entrenched, and the Federal troops—who advanced with great bravery in the face of Confederate batteries—were thrown back with heavy losses. Lee did not have a sufficient number of men to follow up his victory, and the two armies faced each other across the Rappahannock during the remainder of the winter.

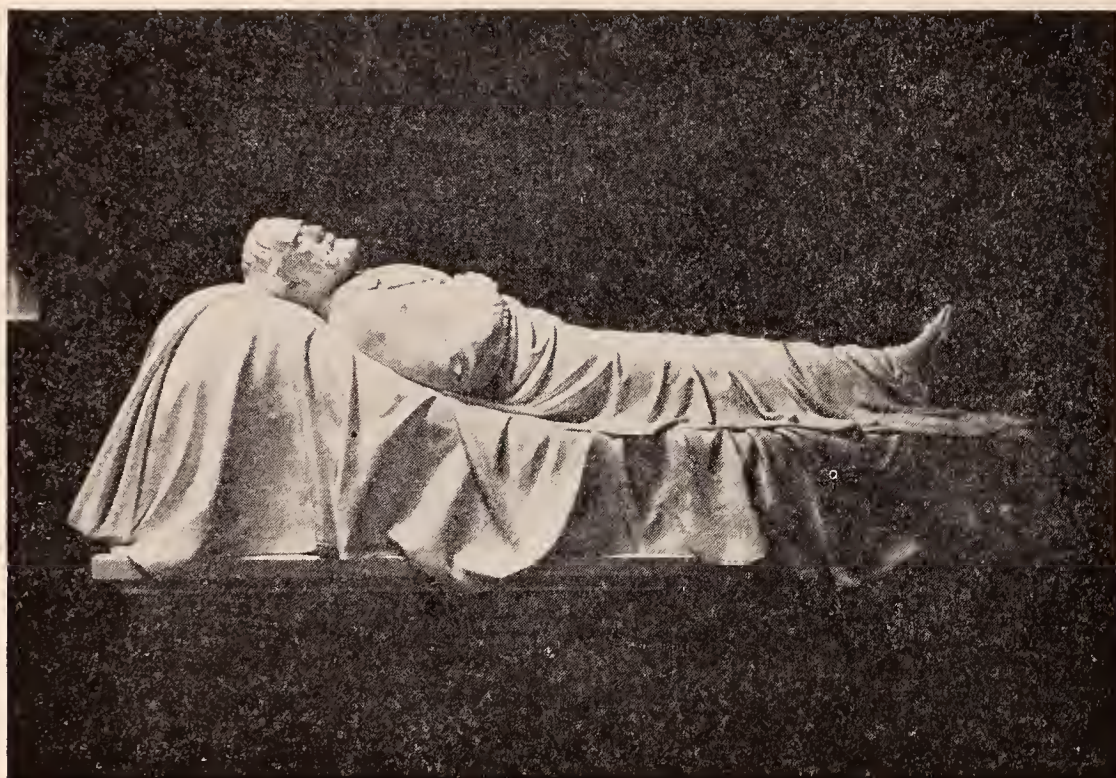
In the spring of 1863, General Hooker, who had succeeded Burnside, boasted to the President: "I have under my command the finest army on the planet." He had a reputation as a fighter, and the prospect of a vigorous offensive increased the morale of his troops. With his army of 130,000 men he felt confident that he could crush Lee's force of 57,000, less than half his own. Preparations were now made to trap the Confederates. Hooker sent Stoneman with 10,000 cavalry to cut the railroad lines in Lee's rear, a movement which

failed. Sedgwick, with about 40,000 men, marched down the Rappahannock to strike the right wing of the Confederates. Hooker planned to cross the Rappahannock and fall upon Lee's left and rear, while that leader was fighting Sedgwick. Large reserves were to be held where they could aid either Hooker or Sedgwick. Even after Hooker had divided his forces, the army under his personal command was larger than that of his adversary. Lee would be driven from behind his breastworks and caught in a trap.

By April 30, Hooker had crossed the river and was at Chancellorsville, a farmhouse about ten miles west of Fredericksburg, where several roads through the Wilderness intersected. This region was a deserted mining area from which the original timber had been cut to supply fuel for neighboring iron furnaces. It was now a lonely country of dense underbrush and ragged trees, extending fifteen miles in one direction and twenty in another. Lee left a part of his army to check or delay Sedgwick before Fredericksburg and went to meet Hooker in the Wilderness. On May 1, Hooker attacked, and when Lee counter-attacked, Hooker drew back and fortified his position.

Lee was informed by his alert cavalry chief, Stuart, that Hooker's extreme right was unprotected. On the night of May 1, Lee and his great lieutenant, Jackson, laid their plans for attack. At four o'clock the next morning Jackson started on his last great flanking movement. Lee had given him two-thirds of his infantry and four-fifths of his artillery. All day long Jackson eagerly pushed forward. Late that afternoon he had reached his objective, opposite Lee in Hooker's rear, and wrote his last note to his chief, "I hope, so soon as practicable, to attack. I trust that an ever kind Providence will bless us with success."

Jackson formed his lines in silence and just before six o'clock he directed his whole army against the unsuspecting and unprepared Federal troops. The Union flank was driven in upon the center, and when night came the Confederates had



RECUMBENT LEE AT LEXINGTON

advanced to within a mile and a half of Chancellorsville in the rear of the Federal army, and had nearly cut across its line of communication. Jackson now reorganized his troops, who were confused by their rapid advance through the Wilderness. While this was being done, he and several members of his staff rode beyond his line to reconnoiter. Upon returning through the darkness they were mistaken for Federal skirmishers and fired upon by their own troops. Jackson was mortally wounded. The wounding of Jackson prevented the full success of the flanking movement, and Hooker was enabled to hold the fords at his back, across which reinforcements came.

Lee now found his army divided and in great peril. While preparing to assault Hooker, Lee heard that Sedgwick had taken Fredericksburg and was advancing to attack him in the rear. Leaving 20,000 men to hold Hooker's army of 60,000 in check, he struck Sedgwick at Salem Church and forced him back across the Rappahannock. He then turned and again faced Hooker. A rain prevented him from attacking at once, and before he had another opportunity to strike, Hooker had retreated across the Rappahannock during the night. Jackson died a few days later. It was a grievous loss to the Confederacy, for there was no one else who had the qualities he possessed which enabled him to execute the bold strategy of his chief or to act with rare judgment on his own initiative.

After his two great victories in Virginia, Lee decided to carry the war into the North once more to obtain provisions, to draw off troops from Vicksburg, if possible, and to dishearten the enemy by a victory on Northern soil. He, therefore, began sending his forces northward on June 3, 1863. He moved cautiously at first until he found out that Hooker's chief concern was to stand between him and Washington.

On June 8, the Confederate cavalry, in making a reconnoissance near Culpeper, came into conflict with the Federal cavalry at Brandy Station. The battle which followed was

doubtless the greatest cavalry battle of the war. The Confederates were victorious. Stuart now began one of his spectacular rides completely around the Federal army. In doing this he went within three miles of Washington and then as far north as Carlisle, Pennsylvania, before joining Lee at Gettysburg. This ride was glorious but unfortunate, since it deprived Lee of his services at a time when he was much needed. By the end of June, Lee's whole army was in Pennsylvania. York was captured and Confederate troops came within four miles of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania's capital. On July 1, detachments of the army of General Meade, who had succeeded Hooker, came into conflict with a part of the Confederate forces at Gettysburg. This was the beginning of the great battle there on July 1, 2 and 3, 1863. The Confederate forces numbered 70,000; the Federal, 93,000. Lee did not have the advantage of his cavalry at the beginning of the fight, and was, therefore, largely in the dark in regard to Meade's movements. He was also unfortunate in having to depend mainly on Longstreet to execute his plans, which called for audacity and rapidity of action. Lee had no more brave corps commander than Longstreet, but at more than one critical moment this lieutenant had insisted on having his own way either by direct influence upon his commanding officer, or by delay in carrying out his orders. The Confederate defeat at Gettysburg was due in part to these causes, and in part to the fact that Meade lacked the overconfidence possessed by his boastful predecessors, Hooker and Pope. His modesty led to respect for his adversary. In spite of the blunder which sent Pickett's men without adequate support on their glorious charge, Lee might have won, had Meade shown less forethought and courage.

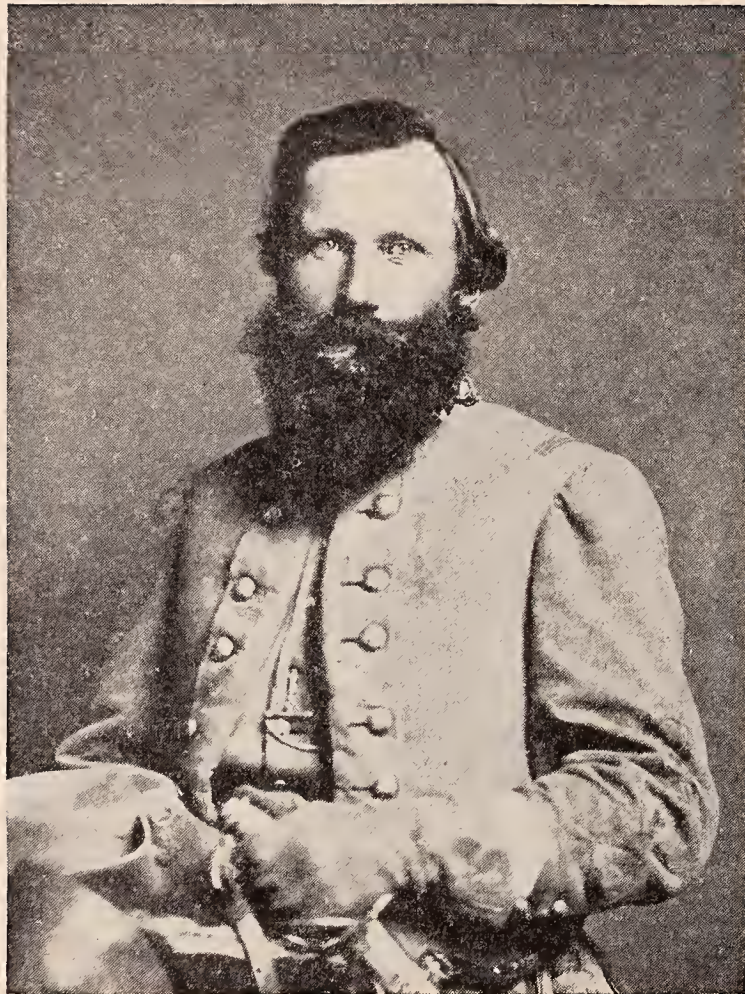
The battle of Gettysburg, except in its ultimate consequences, was not a great Federal victory. Lee's army had suffered on the third day when only a part had attacked. He remained on the battlefield that night and the next day awaited an assault in his turn. He was forced to withdraw on the night

of July 4 because he found it difficult to obtain supplies and because his line of communication with the Shenandoah valley was threatened. He did not cross the Potomac into Virginia, however, until the night of the thirteenth. In its final consequences it was a Federal victory of far-reaching results. Not only was Lee's invasion of the North foiled, but the victory of Meade coincided with Grant's great victory at Vicksburg. The Confederacy was thereafter doomed.

After much maneuvering, which extended over Northern Virginia until Lee's army was almost in sight of Washington, the two antagonists finally went into winter quarters, the Army of the Potomac at Culpeper Court House, and the Army of Northern Virginia along a line from Orange Court House to Gordonsville.

In the spring of 1864 the Confederate army of 60,000 was opposed by a Union army of exactly twice that size. Furthermore, the army of the Potomac was under the immediate control of General Grant, now commander-in-chief of the Federal forces. Grant, the hero of Donelson and Vicksburg, had just added the great victory of Missionary Ridge to his record. He not only had more genius for strategy than those who had preceded him, but he had unlimited courage and a bulldog tenacity which brought him back against Lee after every defeat which he received. Since he realized the hopelessness of out-generalizing his opponent, he set about with determination and energy to destroy that opponent's army by attrition. He admitted his purpose with admirable frankness. His unlimited resources enabled him to win, but not until he had subjected his army to terrible punishment for a whole year.

May 4 found Grant across the Rapidan encamped in the Wilderness, where Hooker had met Lee the year before. Lee allowed Grant to come into the Wilderness without molestation; but he was determined to strike him before his army could emerge into the open country, where his superior artillery and cavalry could be used to advantage. On May 5, the opposing forces, each eager for the offensive, met in the



GENERAL J. E. B. STUART

dense tangle of the Wilderness. The battle lasted two days. First one side and then the other seemed to have the upper hand. A forest fire added to the horrors of the fight. Neither side gave way. Grant lost about 17,666 men, while the Confederates lost about 10,000. A less resolute leader than Grant would have fallen back towards Washington, but his men felt cheered when they found themselves going southward once more. Grant was attempting to thrust his army between Lee's flank and Richmond, but Lee anticipated this movement and blocked his way at Spotsylvania. On May 11, Grant sent to Halleck the following dispatch: "We have now ended the sixth day of very heavy fighting. I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer." On the next day he hurled his men in attack after attack against Lee's well chosen and strongly fortified positions. At one time during the fighting in a salient of Lee's line, the famous "Bloody Angle," the ground was covered with heaps of dead bodies and large trees were gnawed in two by the bullets. The battles around Spotsylvania lasted until May 21. Grant was repulsed in his attempt both to break Lee's line and to turn his flank.

During this campaign the Confederacy suffered a severe loss in the death of General J. E. B. Stuart. He fell on May 11, 1864, in a severe engagement with Sheridan's cavalry at Yellow Tavern, about six miles north of Richmond.

On May 20, Grant received 40,000 new troops. He now left the battlefield and moved to the southeast in order to turn Lee's flank or to force him to abandon his position. He might then be able to strike Lee before he could again adequately fortify his position. Lee followed along interior lines, and drew his army behind the North Anna River. Here he received his first reinforcements—only 9,000 men. Lee's army was stationed back from the river but parallel to it. Grant sent troops across the river at several points. Lee, who was at the time confined to his tent by sickness and had been prevented from checking Grant's movement, now pivoted his lines on the stream and drew back both flanks, his manœuvre

resembling the closing of an umbrella. This manœuvre left one Federal corps on the right of Lee's united army and two on the left. In order to send aid from one side to the other, troops would be compelled to cross the river twice, an operation which would have consumed three hours. Lee saw the opportunity of striking the enemy in detail, but his illness prevented his taking advantage of it. Grant withdrew across the North Anna, and again shifted his army to the left; but once more Lee stood skillfully entrenched in front of him. Lee had chosen a strong position at Cold Harbor and had fortified it. He was within six miles of the outer fortifications of Richmond, near the battleground of Gaines' Mill. Grant now recklessly abandoned his flanking movement and ordered a direct assault on his opponent's fortifications. At 4:30 on the morning of June 3 the Federal troops charged the Confederate line. It was a hopeless, and, therefore, a useless attack. The flower of the Federal army went down under the terrible fire of the Confederates. In one corps alone, 3,000 fell within twenty-two minutes. In less than an hour, 13,000 Federal troops were dead or wounded.

Grant's determination to fight it out "on this line" had cost his army dearly in men and in morale. In about a month, from May 4 to June 12 Grant had lost 54,926 men between the Rapidan and the James, a number about equal to the whole Confederate army which he was trying to crush. One soldier in almost every three in Grant's army fell dead or wounded before Lee's lines. These figures bear eloquent testimony to the skill and fighting qualities of Lee and his men and also to the reckless determination and courage of Grant and his army. "I think," wrote Meade, with some unconscious satisfaction, perhaps, "Grant has had his eyes opened and is willing to admit now that Virginia and Lee's army is not Tennessee and Bragg's."

In pursuing his policy of attrition, Grant had received more than his just portion of wear and tear. It is no wonder then that, although summer had just begun, he altered his strategy.

He now turned his attention from hammering on Lee's army to the siege of Richmond. This was a wise change of plan on his part, and was so recognized by Lee. "We must destroy the Federal army before they get to the James River," Lee said to Early. "If they get there, it will become a siege, and then it will be a mere question of time."

Had the Confederate government been willing to place the safety of Lee's army above that of the capital city, he could have fallen back to the west and could have continued to fight it out along his own line as he had been doing. But this was not to be. Grant was able to plant himself in a strongly fortified position before Richmond, and by bringing in an endless stream of reinforcements, make the capture of the opposing, dwindling army "a mere question of time."

The natural road to Richmond lay through the railroad center, Petersburg. From June 12 to June 16 Grant transferred his army across the James, and on June 16, 17 and 18 he vainly assaulted the Confederate lines before Petersburg with a loss of about 10,000 men. Then began his long siege of Petersburg, which lasted until the spring of 1865.

After Grant had failed both to take the Confederate position by assault and to outflank Lee's army, he planned to break the center of his lines by exploding a mine under the Confederate breastworks. A gallery 510.8 feet long was dug ending under the Confederate fortifications, with two lateral branches of thirty-seven feet and thirty-eight feet long, respectively. In these lateral branches there were placed 8,000 pounds of powder. Troops and artillery were massed at the point opposite the mine. The plan was carefully conceived but poorly executed. The mine exploded at dawn on July 30, 1864, and the Federal charge met a well prepared resistance. "The Crater" became a Federal burying ground and the Confederate lines were restored.

While the campaign from the Wilderness to Cold Harbor was in progress, the Federal General Hunter was raiding the

Valley, bringing fire as well as the sword to one of the finest sections of his native state. Even private homes were burned by his order. On June 11 he entered Lexington and burned Governor Letcher's home¹⁹ and the buildings of the Virginia Military Institute. General Lee now dispatched Gen. Jubal A. Early to the Valley to strike Hunter and to advance on Washington.

After driving Hunter back from Lynchburg, Early marched down the Valley, defeated Federal troops at Frederick, Maryland, and on July 11 stood with his 20,000 veterans before the fortifications on the Seventh Street road north of Washington. The dome of the Capitol was in sight of the Confederate army. While Richmond was secure, Washington was in imminent danger of being captured. Communications with the North had been cut, and the city was in a state of panic. The historian Rhodes affirms that, if Early had acted promptly before Federal reinforcements arrived, he could have taken the capital. But the opportunity soon passed. In September, Grant sent Sheridan into the Valley with orders to drive out Early and to lay waste the country. "If the war is to last another year," he said, "we want the Shenandoah Valley to remain a barren waste."²⁰

After defeating Early's small force at Opequan near Winchester in a bloody battle, which lasted all day (September 19), and again at Fisher's Hill (September 21), Sheridan laid waste the Valley. On October 7 he reported to Grant from Woodstock: "In moving back to this point the whole country from the Blue Ridge to the North Mountains has been made untenable for a rebel army. I have destroyed over 2,000 barns filled with wheat, hay and farming implements; over 70 mills filled with flour and wheat; have driven in front

¹⁹As early as January, 1863, Governor Letcher had reported to the Legislature, "Our cities, towns and counties indicate that they have been cursed by the presence of a heaven-defying and hell-deserving rabble."—*House Journal*, 1862-63, message of January 7, 1863.

²⁰Sanford C. Kellogg, U. S. A., *The Shenandoah Valley and Virginia, 1861-1865*; New York and Washington, 1903.

of the army over 4,000 head of stock, and have killed and issued to the troops not less than 3,000 sheep. This destruction embraces the Luray Valley and Little Fort Valley, as well as the main Valley. A large number of horses has been obtained, a proper estimate of which I cannot now make. Tomorrow I will continue the destruction of wheat, forage, etc., down to Fisher's Hill. When this is completed the Valley from Winchester up to Staunton, ninety-two miles, will have but little in it for man or beast."²¹

On October 19, Early surprised and defeated Sheridan's army at Cedar Creek, but while some of his men were plundering the Federal camp, his own army was routed by Sheridan's forces which had been reorganized. Sheridan then continued his destruction of the Valley, and later joined Grant before Petersburg. Early's little army was completely dispersed at Waynesboro on March 2, 1865. On March 3, General Custer advanced on Charlottesville. Upon his arrival he was met by the mayor and other prominent citizens, who surrendered the town to him.²²

It will not be out of place here to mention that, shortly after the Valley of Virginia was devastated, Sherman began his famous march through Georgia. He had taken Atlanta, which had been evacuated by the Confederates on September 2. The exploits of Sheridan and Sherman had greatly encouraged the people of the North and brought gloom to the Confederates. According to E. A. Pollard, "The effect of Sherman's march to the sea on the morale of the Confederacy dates the first chapter of its subjugation."²³

A great many Southerners disliked and distrusted President Davis and his cabinet. Congress and the President were mutually hostile. Early in 1865, Congress forced Davis to appoint Lee commander-in-chief of the armies—a measure which came too late to be of service. In January a delegation

²¹Kellogg, p. 212.

²²Kellogg, p. 245.

²³*Southern History of the War*, 1865, p. 425.

of the House of Representatives, led by its speaker, Mr. Boccock, addressed to Mr. Davis a paper stating that Congress did not have confidence in the ability of his cabinet. Mr. Seddon, of Virginia, the secretary of war, resigned in spite of President Davis' protest. Congress also forced Davis to restore Johnston to the army that had been shattered through Hood's recklessness and incompetency. During the long debate in Congress on the Johnston-Davis controversy, Mr. Wigfall, of Texas, characterized the Confederate President as "An amalgam of malice and mediocrity." Much of the suffering of General Lee's army from lack of proper food was attributed to the inefficiency of the commissary department. The army lived from hand to mouth. Lee stated to the governor that his men were deserting because of short rations; and on December 14 he telegraphed President Davis that his troops were without meat.²⁴

The suffering of the families at home, due to the raids of the Federal cavalry through Virginia, and to destructive raids in other states, caused the men much uneasiness about those whom they loved. Letters from home, even when brave and as cheerful as possible, reflected the dread of raiding parties and the weariness and anguish brought by four years of separation from loved ones, during which time there had been deaths in almost every family. In the course of those years the brave women of the Confederacy, with the old men and the children, met the infrequent mails and scanned with beating hearts the latest lists of casualties. Their life was lonely and was wanting in the comradeship and excitement of the camp and the battlefield. Conditions at home accounted largely for the frequent desertions. Pollard estimates that Lee lost nearly one-half of his army in this way alone during this winter of 1864-1865.²⁵

Rumors of peace did not add to the martial spirit of the soldiers. On January 30, 1865, President Lincoln and his

²⁴Pollard, 480.

²⁵Pollard, p. 476.

secretary of state, Mr. Seward, met three Confederate commissioners, Vice-President A. H. Stephens, Senator R. M. T. Hunter and Judge J. A. Campbell, on board a steamer on Hampton Roads. The conference lasted for four hours, but the Confederates were unable to secure any terms that would recognize the existence of their government. The President of the United States could only negotiate on the basis of complete submission and subject to the will of Congress.

The failure of this conference was a very potent factor in silencing the peace advocates in the South. They were forced to the conclusion that independence could only be gained by the sword.

Shortly after the failure of the conference to arrange a peace through diplomacy, strong efforts were made to revive the enthusiasm of the Confederate army. Pickett's Division, which had been reorganized, was marched in review before President Davis and General Lee, in the presence of a large part of the Army of Northern Virginia. At this time, two great mass meetings were held in Richmond, one on February 6, 1865, and a larger one at the African Church, February 9. At the latter meeting Hon. R. M. T. Hunter presided. Among those who were present were President Davis, Judah P. Benjamin, Joseph Mayo, mayor of Richmond, Governor Smith, Captain Semmes of the Navy, J. Randolph Tucker, John B. Baldwin, John Goode and other men of note.²⁶ Many eloquent speeches were made and according to contemporary accounts, "Never before had the war spirit burned so fiercely and so steadily." Similar meetings were held among the soldiers in the field. General Henry A. Wise rendered excellent service in encouraging the men in the trenches with his happy gift of speech.

The soldiers in the trenches before Petersburg had already grown more hopeful and cheerful when the winter weather became warm and mild like that of spring. The feeling of many soldiers at the front is no doubt expressed in the fol-

²⁶H. R. Pollard, p. 119.

lowing extracts from letters written by a sergeant in the artillery,²⁷ dated January 25, 1865:

“I write cheerfully always because I feel so—our reverses haven’t discouraged me, haven’t made me feel that our cause is lost—it makes me feel sad though to think that every reverse will lengthen this cruel war and increase the sufferings of our people—and it makes me *mad* to know that so many at home, who were at first red hot for the war and willing to make any and every sacrifice, are now talking about ‘being whipped’ and reconstruction and emancipation, and all such treason and tom-foolery. This only tends to encourage the enemy, to dishearten our soldiers, to lengthen out the war, and to make matters worse. In my opinion, Jeff Davis ought to have hung old Blair and Singleton.”

“To give you some idea,” he wrote on February 2, 1865, “of the quiet on our lines, ladies now frequently ride out from Petersburg to visit the trenches; and this evening I noticed a good number standing up on our breastworks, where it would have been instant death to have stood for a moment a few weeks since. Some of them also went down to the picket line, not more than forty yards from, and in full view of, the blue-coated rascals. The Yankees brought out a brass band to play for them.” On February 4 he wrote: “I have no faith in the peace commissioners effecting any good—fear they may do much harm, hope for the best. Lieut. Dick Wise (old Gen’l’s son) told me this morning he had just been to meet a flag of truce from the enemy, bringing the information that our commissioners will return through our lines this morning. I don’t think they have been gone long enough to do much good or harm. * * * We are still very quiet—though Gen’l Anderson ordered that sharp-shooting be resumed last night. The pickets were very much opposed to it on both sides, and fired a few shots all along through the night, taking good care to fire very high or very low. There is still no firing through the

²⁷Grandfather of the author of the present volume, Nathaniel Venable Watkins, to his wife.



A CONFEDERATE PRIVATE

day, and we walk about wherever we choose with perfect impunity. Frank W. came up to my tent and spent the morning yesterday,—he was as fat and as funny as ever,—says the gloom which has been hanging over the country was rapidly disappearing, and everybody thought our affairs were brightening. I think it is disappearing, as far as I can see, from our army;—desertions have almost stopped entirely,—but still you can meet with a few croakers even among our officers, who say we are whipped. I understand there is one such in our Rgt. and if I ever hear him say so I shall report him to the Col. and try to have him cashiered. If an officer thinks so even to himself, he ought to be broken and put in the ranks—I may send this by Johnny—also by him a bundle of your old letters which I *cannot* make up my mind to burn.”

These and other letters from the front give us interesting glimpses into the Confederate soldier's life and thoughts at this time. It shows that the men of the army of Northern Virginia and the people at home had been severely shaken in their morale. The men in the ranks knew the situation, but were regaining their former spirits. It was a democratic army which kept in close touch with the political as well as with the military situation.

Since the beginning of the siege of Richmond and Petersburg, Lee had defended a line thirty-five miles long with his small forces. Until the battle of Five Forks, on April 1, 1865, he had repulsed Grant's attempts to outflank and to break the center of his army, in spite of the fact that his men suffered from want of proper food and clothing and were greatly disheartened by the numerous reverses which their cause had suffered. Many were in rags and barefooted. Grant had not been able to surround Lee's troops. The railroads to the south and west were still bringing in supplies and offered the army a means of retreat.

On March 31, Sheridan, who was menacing the Confederate line of retreat, was pushed back to Dinwiddie Court-House and was in grave danger when night fell, but he was

reinforced, and the next morning (April 1, 1865) he struck the Confederate forces which had established themselves about four miles ahead of their main position, at Five Forks. The Confederate line was broken and Grant was enabled to seize the Southside (now Norfolk and Western) Railroad. This made the evacuation of Petersburg inevitable and sealed the doom of Richmond. Grant followed up this victory the next day by a determined assault all along Lee's front; and the Confederate army, pierced in three places, fell back to the inner fortifications of Petersburg. That night Lee led his men, who did not number more than 30,000,²⁸ out of Petersburg. As the soldiers turned their faces towards Richmond, they saw reflected against the sky a red glow. The Confederate capital city was burning.

On Sunday morning, April 2, 1865, when the Confederate army was falling back to Petersburg, the inhabitants of Richmond were enjoying the calm beauty and freshness of a spring morning. Few had knowledge of the battles that had been in progress for three days only a few miles away; and none knew that the Confederate line was stretched to the breaking point.²⁹

The first intimation of the approaching calamity was received in the churches of the city. As President Davis sat in his pew at St. Paul's Church that morning a messenger from General Lee handed him a dispatch. The message told of the army's defeat before Petersburg and advised the government to prepare to evacuate Richmond that night. The Confederate president read the message in silence and left the church. He alone knew the dread contents of that dispatch; "but," as a contemporary wrote, "an uneasy whisper ran through the congregation, and as they were hastily dismissed, the rumor was caught up in the streets that Richmond was to be evacuated, and it was soon carried to the ends of the city." When Doctor Hoge, of the Presbyterian Church, brought his sermon

²⁸Among those killed on this day was Gen. A. P. Hill, a native of Culpeper County, and one of General Lee's most able corps commanders.

²⁹Pollard, *Southern History of the War*, p. 490.

to a close, and before the last hymn was sung, he told his congregation the sad news that the army had "met with a reverse."

That afternoon evacuation began in earnest and Richmond was the scene of the wildest confusion. The city council ordered the destruction of all the liquor in the city. About midnight committees of citizens began the work. "Hundreds of barrels of liquor were rolled into the street and the heads knocked in. The gutters ran with a liquor freshet, and the fumes filled and impregnated the air." Inflamed with spirits and relieved of the restraining influence of civil and military rule, which had broken down, ruffians began pillaging the stores. Late in the night the unfortunate order came from General Ewell's headquarters to burn the four principal warehouses of the city in spite of the protest of the mayor and the citizens. These warehouses were the center of the business section. For example, the Shockoe warehouse was adjoining the famous Galligo flour mills. The order was executed. In addition, the ships in the James were blown up and the chief bridges over that river were burned—the Danville railroad bridge, the Petersburg railroad bridge, and Mayo's bridge to Manchester (South Richmond). By the end of the day, the entire business portion of the city, an area of about twenty blocks, was a mass of smoking ruins.

At daybreak a small cavalry detachment of General Weitzel's troops entered Richmond and placed the United States flag over the Capitol. "As the day advanced, Weitzel's troops poured through the streets of the city. Long lines of negro cavalry swept by the Exchange Hotel, brandishing their swords and uttering savage shouts. These shouts, the roar of devouring flames, the endless processions of plunderers passing from street to street, tugging away the prizes they had drawn from the hellish circle of the fire, made up an indescribable horror. Here were the garish Yankee troops sweeping up towards the Capitol Square, with music and wild cheers; everywhere, almost, the pandemonium of fire and pillage; and

in the midst of all the wild agony, the distress of women and children rushing towards the open square for a breath of pure air, all that was now left them in heaven's great hollowness. And even that was not to be obtained there. The air, even in the square of the Capitol, was almost choking; and one traversed it blinded by cinders and struggling for breath.'³⁰

Here beneath the trees were family groups — women, children and old men—huddled around their few remaining earthly possessions, which they had dragged from their burning homes. General Weitzel aided in stopping the flames and restored order to the distracted city.

While the capital city was suffering this agony, President Davis removed the seat of government to Danville, which was put in a state of defense. The brave Admiral Raphael Semmes was made a brigadier-general and placed in charge of the defenses, having under his command a naval brigade and two battalions of infantry.³¹

After leaving Petersburg, Lee attempted to fall back southward along the Danville Railroad, but the supplies for his army which should have been collected at Amelia Court-House (thirty-six miles from Richmond) were lacking and a day was lost in securing food. On April 5, part of Grant's army had moved up the Southside Railroad along interior lines and occupied Burkeville, the junction of the Southside with the Danville Railroad. Sheridan had reached Jetersville on the Danville road, forty-three miles from Richmond. On April 6 General Meade, with a large part of his force, stood in Lee's way at Burkeville, and Sheridan blocked his advance toward Danville. Lee now led his army across the country towards Farmville, where he planned to follow the Southside Railroad and join forces with Johnston. The army marched slowly over the muddy roads and through swollen streams, feeding on parched corn, and fighting the Federal troops, which

³⁰Pollard, pp. 494-495.

³¹Battles and Leaders, p. 763n. *When Lee surrendered the Confederate government was moved to Greensboro, North Carolina.*

harassed their flank and rear. At Farmville the Confederate troops had their first proper food after leaving Petersburg.

For the first time in four years, Lee's army of Northern Virginia had lost hope. The retreat from Petersburg, the fall of Richmond, and the increasing difficulties with which they were beset, indicated to them that the end was near. Many veterans of long and honorable service left the army and turned their faces homeward to avoid surrender. They did not think of themselves as deserters.³²

On Sunday, April 9, General Lee arranged a truce with Grant in order to discuss surrender. The two leaders met at Mr. McLean's house in the little village of Appomattox Court-House. Here they signed liberal terms of surrender. Grant stopped demonstrations of joy among his troops with the words, "The war is over; the rebels are our countrymen again; and the best sign of rejoicing after the victory will be to abstain from all demonstrations in the field." He afterwards wrote that, upon meeting Lee in person, he "felt like anything rather than rejoicing at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and valiantly." After the terms of surrender had been made, Lee rode slowly back to the veterans of his army who had followed him through many victorious battlefields, and who had never ceased to give him their love and confidence even in this last defeat. As they greeted their defeated chieftain with cheers and crowded about him to show him their affection, he said, "We have fought through the war together. I have done the best I could for you. My heart is too full to say more."

³²Henry Robinson Pollard, *Memoirs and Sketches of My Life*, Richmond, 1923, p. 131.

CHAPTER II

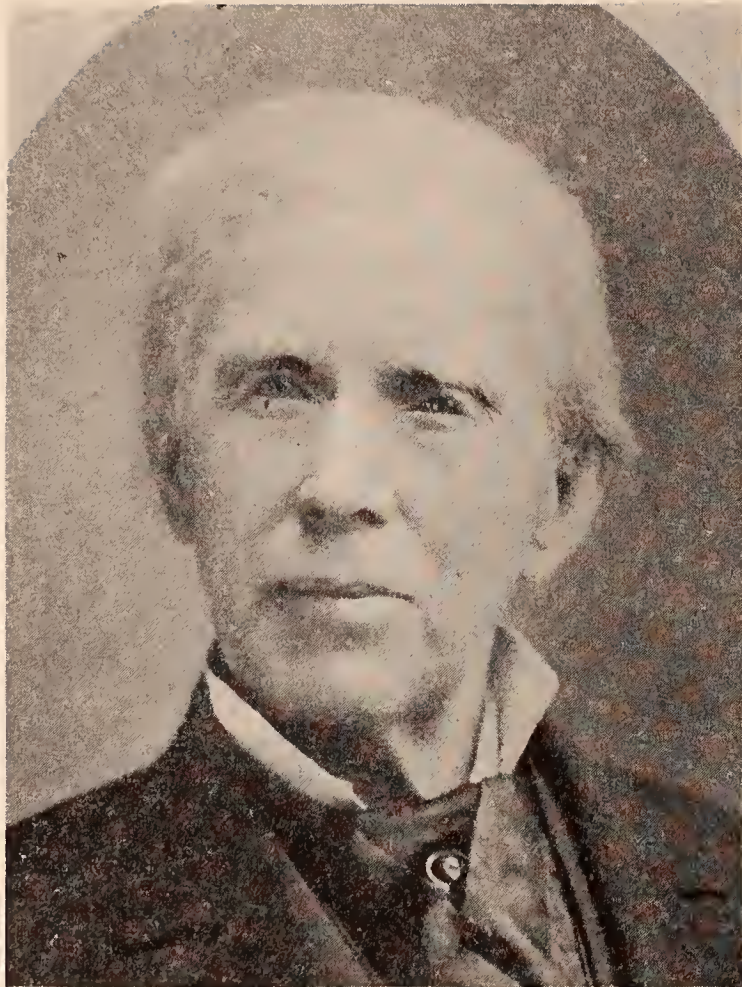
THE WHEELING GOVERNMENT AND THE FORMATION OF WEST VIRGINIA

During the period of strife and agony, Virginia lost a third of her territory. There was created from the old Mother of States a new daughter, West Virginia, out of due season and against her wishes.¹

Prior to 1851 there was constant strife between the eastern and western sections of the State. It was the continuation of the struggle between the old, rich, and more conservative section, and the newer and more aggressive and more democratic section. This struggle followed the line of the frontier as it was pushed westward. Piedmont and the Valley became closely associated with the older portion of Virginia. But the Alleghanies set a barrier between the three eastern sections and Trans-Alleghany which was never broken down, and which made possible the disruption of the State.

The geographical character and situation of Western Virginia caused a large part of that region to be more closely affiliated with Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Maryland than with Eastern Virginia. The rivers led commerce to the North and brought in Northern settlers. The mountains shut off communication with the South. There developed in the two sections enough social and economic differences to further separate them. The west grew rapidly in numbers, but its representation in the State legislature was not increased proportionally. In fact, Virginia, like most of the older commonwealths, was slow to drop the property qualifications and also slow to trust

¹Henry A. Wise, with his characteristic genius for expression, called the new state "the bastard offspring of a political rape."



WILLIAM SMITH
Governor, 1864-1865

the more democratic and less wealthy western region with too much power. The question of representation was greatly agitated for a dozen years before 1829. In that year the Valley and Trans-Alleghany sections were strong enough to secure the calling of a constitutional convention, which met in Richmond on October 5, 1829. In this body 362,745 white inhabitants of the Tidewater and the Piedmont were represented by sixty-eight delegates; while the 319,518 white inhabitants of the Valley and the Trans-Alleghany were represented by only twenty-eight.²

At this time the Valley was in sympathy with the east, and the dividing political line was shifted from the Blue Ridge to the Alleghanies. Once again the State had escaped "the monstrous tyranny of King Numbers," as the eccentric John Randolph characterized a more popular government. The Constitution of 1830 left the Western Virginians with their old grievances, and they continued their strife for reform. The Constitution of 1851 granted universal white manhood suffrage, and so arranged the system of representation that the western counties had a majority of four votes in the Assembly in joint session. The west controlled the House of Delegates and the east controlled the Senate. Arrangement was made for redistricting at regular intervals in the future, according to population. The people of West Virginia (as the inhabitants had begun to call the Trans-Alleghany region) thought that the system of representation could still be improved and that slaves were not taxed heavily enough. But there was very little political strife for the next ten years. The west proceeded to elect a governor and state senators. The commonwealth now entered upon an era of peace, reform, and prosperity.

One of the long standing causes of friction between the two

²McGregor, *The Disruption of Virginia*, p. 34. The author is greatly indebted throughout this chapter to Dr. McGregor for his excellent work in this field. For the earlier discussion of sectionalism in Virginia, see Ambler, *Sectionalism in Virginia*.

sections was the fact that most of the money expended by the State for works of internal improvement had gone to the aid of improvements in its eastern part. Had Virginia taken the advice given by Washington as early as 1753 to join more closely the two great divisions of the Commonwealth, the separation might not have come. The principal obstacle in the way of this closer union, he said, would be "*the unfortunate jealousy*, which ever has, and it is to be feared ever will, prevail, lest one part of the State shall obtain an advantage over the other parts."³ Another great Virginian, Chief Justice Marshall, was a member of a commission appointed by the legislature to view certain rivers in the State. They explored the upper waters of the James, crossed the mountains, and followed the line of the unexplored New River. They mapped out the course of the James River and Kanawha improvement, which for almost a half century was the foremost internal improvement scheme of Virginia.⁴

In 1861, of the 1,379 miles of completed railroad in Virginia only 361 miles had been constructed in Western Virginia. The building of internal improvements in that region had been hampered by sectional jealousy; by the fact that it paid less taxes than the eastern section; and by the difficulty of crossing the mountains. There were also differences between the two sections in regard to slavery. Within the counties now composing the State of West Virginia, there were about 323,526 whites and 28,256 negro slaves. In what is now Virginia, there were about 685,000 whites and 490,865 negro slaves. Although Western Virginia had few slaves, there was no great hostility to slavery there and no desire to keep the free negroes in their midst. In 1860, only 2,709 such negroes lived in the western counties, while there were 58,042 free colored persons in what are now Virginia counties. Western Virginians were, there-

³Morton, "Virginia State Debt," etc., p. 352.

⁴Morton, "Virginia State Debt," etc., p. 355; Report in *Documents of House of Representatives*, 1812-13.

fore, not much concerned with the questions of race and slavery which greatly agitated the remainder of the State.

Yet with all these factors which tended to separate the two sections, the dividing of Virginia did not result from a great popular desire for separation on the part of the Western Virginians. A close student of the disruption of Virginia writes, "In western Virginia, outside of the northern Panhandle, Lincoln was given practically no support [in 1860], even in those counties where few slaves were held. * * * It cannot be emphasized too strongly that, if the result of the election in Western Virginia has any meaning at all, it means that the people in that section had little more sympathy with the anti-slavery propaganda than had their eastern brethren. * * * It cannot be controverted that, whatever may be the popular opinion to the contrary, the whole State of Virginia, from the Ohio River to the Atlantic Ocean, and from Pennsylvania and Maryland to Kentucky and North Carolina, was pretty well united on the general issues of slavery and states rights."⁵

Delegates from twenty-one counties voted for secession and those of nineteen, the most wealthy and populous, voted against secession. A number of eastern delegates voted against secession, but all but one had their votes changed to the affirmative later.⁶

On April 19, John S. Carlile, who had led the Union forces in the Secession Convention, left for his home in Western Virginia. On the next day, the remaining Unionists met in the room of Sherrard Clemans at the Powhatan Hotel, and here they decided to return to Trans-Alleghany, and found a new state.⁷ They left Richmond the next morning, with Governor Letcher's permission, and before the end of the month they were agitating against secession. Public sentiment in that region, however, did not approve coercing the South. On April 22, a Unionist meeting was held at Clarksburg in

⁵McGregor, 67-68.

⁶McGregor, 176.

⁷Ibid, 183.

Harrison County, the home of John S. Carlile, and it was decided to call a convention of anti-secessionists at Wheeling. Wheeling, the largest city in Western Virginia, was chosen because it was thoroughly Unionist in sentiment. It was situated on the old National Road, and on the Ohio River in the northern Panhandle, close to and between the states of Ohio and Pennsylvania. Union sentiment and propaganda found an excellent means of expression in the Wheeling *Intelligencer*. It was in this paper that the formal call for a convention was published on April 27. In answer to this call, the larger towns held mass meetings and elected delegates. The rural districts, which contained three-fourths of the population, did not take part in the movement. More than a third of the 429 men who were chosen came from the counties near Wheeling. Twenty-six counties were not represented.

The first convention at Wheeling met on May 13, 1861. An attempt to establish a new state failed. But a resolution was adopted directing the people of Western Virginia to ignore the Ordinance of Secession and to elect delegates to a convention which was called to meet in Wheeling on June 11. This convention, when it met, was a great disappointment to the North. No enthusiasm was shown by the West Virginians for enlisting in the Federal armies, and the attempt to organize a new commonwealth had failed.

The June convention, in which twenty-seven counties were represented, passed a resolution called the "Declaration of the People of Virginia," in which it was declared that a majority of the people had the right to change or abolish an inadequate government. On June 19, an ordinance was adopted providing for the reorganization of the State. A General Assembly was to meet at Wheeling on July 1. The Assembly was authorized to create a state debt. County and state officers were required to take an oath of allegiance to the United States. The convention then proceeded to elect the higher state officers. F. H. Peirpoint was chosen governor of this restored Virginia, after which the convention adjourned

(June 25) to meet again on August 6. The June convention had been more in favor of separating the state than the May convention, but recognized the expediency of not advocating it too strongly at that time.

The so-called General Assembly of Virginia met at Wheeling on July 2, 1861. The total number of members in the two Houses probably never exceeded thirty-eight.⁸ This body chose as United States senators John S. Carlile and Waitman T. Willey.

The formation of the Wheeling government as the government of the whole State of Virginia was entirely revolutionary. If Virginia were out of the Union, as it claimed to be, the government at Richmond was the legal state government. If the State had not seceded, as President Lincoln claimed, then the government in Richmond was the real government, and the proceedings at Wheeling were most irregular.⁹

When Congress met in extra session on July 4, 1861, the new group of "senators" and "representatives" from Virginia presented themselves for admission. Lincoln, in his message to Congress, advocated the recognition of the reorganized government as the government of Virginia. The debate on the subject in that body showed that the constitutional questions in the way of recognition were formidable; but constitutionality yielded to expediency and the applicants were admitted. The "Wheeling," "Peirpoint," or "Restored" government, as it is variously called, was now officially recognized by both the President and Congress.

On August 6, 1861, the June convention met in its second session. The chief question before it was the erection of a new state out of the western counties. The committee on division drew a boundary line which took in the twenty counties now forming Western and Northern Virginia. Some of these were

⁸McGregor, 220.

⁹While claiming to be abiding by the Virginia Constitution of 1850 the Wheeling group had frequently departed from it.

not even represented in the convention and some were known to be loyal to the Richmond government. This line of division was warmly debated.

Finally, on August 20, a compromise ordinance was agreed upon and was adopted. This ordinance provided that thirty-nine counties should form the new state, which was to be called "Kanawha." In addition, Berkeley, Greenbrier, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Morgan, and Pocahontas were to decide by local option on October 24 whether or not they wished to be annexed to the new commonwealth. On the same day, the people throughout the territory comprising the new state were to choose delegates to a constitutional convention.

The proceedings chronicled above were exceedingly irregular and inconsistent. A West Virginia historian, Dr. James C. McGregor, thus describes the sentiment of many people of Western Virginia in regard to the new state:

"Just as the large body of western Virginians were neutral in the conflict [the war] that was pending, so were they indifferent as to the actions of the Wheeling government, showing their disapproval by staying away from the polls. There was a general feeling that the new state, if formed, would be the result of a secret, restless desire on the part of aspiring politicians to obtain offices. The people were suspicious of a ruling clique which destroyed old constitutions and enacted new ones with such ease and with so little regard to public sentiment. The same group of men organized the May Convention, summoned the June Convention, called together and sat as members in the rump legislature; met one day as a convention and passed an ordinance setting up a new state; met the next day as the General Assembly of Virginia and gave their consent to the very act which they had agreed to the day before; created offices for themselves and fixed their own salaries. Then, to cap the climax, a free vote was made impossible and none but known adherents of the new state were permitted to go to the polls. It was admitted that, even in the Panhandle, there was no enthusiasm for the new state."¹⁰

¹⁰McGregor, 247-248.

The constitutional convention met at Wheeling on November 26, 1861, to frame a constitution for the proposed State of Kanawha. The spirit in which the members worked is well set forth in a remark of "Senator" Willey, who was present, that "these are revolutionary times. The house is on fire and we cannot be very technical." So great was the attachment to the name "Virginia" among the constituents of its members that the convention, by a large majority (30 to 14), named the new state "West Virginia." Many speakers admitted in the convention the strong sympathy for secession or the hostility to the division of the State which existed in the counties which they represented. According to Dr. McGregor, "So frank were these admissions that the people of the western portion of Virginia were southern in their sympathies that the convention felt it necessary to reject a motion to have the debates published."¹¹

The sentiment in the convention was so strong against the abolition of slavery that this body made no laws to that effect. But the constitution forbade the entry of negroes into the State, whether slave or free.

The constitution was submitted to the people in April, 1862. It was adopted by a vote of 20,622 to 440. These figures do not indicate the actual situation. A third of the affirmative vote was cast in four northern Panhandle counties. The counties bordering Virginia were silent. According to Dr. McGregor, "The measure was practically adopted by a vote of six counties, and the silent protests of more than twenty other counties were passed unheeded; and the present State of West Virginia is composed of counties, a majority of which were opposed to the division of the State."¹²

On May 5, 1862, an extra session of the "Restored" legislature met in Wheeling. This body of thirty-one delegates and ten senators, acting in the name of the people of the whole State of Virginia, gave the official consent required by the

¹¹McGregor, 270.

¹²McGregor, 274-275.

Federal Constitution to the formation of the State of West Virginia out of part of the State of Virginia.

On May 29, 1862, Senator Willey presented to the Senate a memorial from the legislature of "Restored" Virginia giving its consent to the formation of a new state from Western Virginia. In this strange document, Virginia was represented as urging Congress to dismember herself, because of the fact that her own government in the past had mistreated the western counties, who were represented as eager for separation from the mother state. It also declared with peculiar frankness that only those counties which were to form the new commonwealth wished the separation; and, furthermore, that there was much opposition even in these.

The request for dividing the State was championed in the Federal Senate by Senator Willey. Senator Carlile, one of the original leaders of the "new state" plan, pretended to favor the division, but later in the session attempted to prevent its accomplishment. The bill was the cause of much opposition on account of the legal inconsistencies of the whole affair and on account of its inexpediency. It was passed, however, on December 10, 1862, by a party vote of ninety-six to fifty-five. Lincoln requested the opinion of his cabinet as to the legality and the expediency of the bill. The cabinet was equally divided on the subject. Chase, Seward, and Stanton approved the measure, and Bates (Attorney-General and a native of Virginia), Blair, and Welles opposed it. President Lincoln signed the bill and justified the admission of West Virginia largely on the ground of expediency. He explained that since it was a war measure, it would not furnish a disturbing precedent in times of peace.

The act of admission was conditioned upon the acceptance by the West Virginians of an amendment to the state constitution providing for the gradual emancipation of slaves within the State. The constitutional convention was accordingly reassembled on February 12, 1863, and the constitution amended. The amended constitution was ratified by a vote

of the people on March 26, and on April 19 the President issued a proclamation declaring that West Virginia was ready for admission, which would take effect on June 20, 1863. On that date, West Virginia became a state of the Union. Virginia had lost a third of her territory.



Governor, 1865-1868

CHAPTER III

THE "RESTORED GOVERNMENT" AT ALEXANDRIA AND THE BEGINNING OF RECONSTRUCTION

The "Restored Government" of Virginia had now given away most of the territory under its feet to form the new State of West Virginia. It could not gracefully remain in West Virginia while claiming to exist as the government of Virginia. Peirpoint consequently moved his seat of government to Alexandria in the summer of 1863. This so-called government of Virginia extended its control, after a fashion, over those sections of the State which were at that time within the lines of the Federal armies; namely, Alexandria City and Alexandria County (now Arlington), Fairfax, Northampton, Accomac, Norfolk City, and the adjacent country. A few representatives came from counties over which the government had no control. Fairfax was represented in both the "Restored" legislature at Alexandria and in the unrestored one at Richmond.

Prior to the disruption of Virginia, the "Restored Government" could claim, over a limited area, a certain amount of loyalty to itself. Now only a few hundred "loyal" citizens were left—those who were emigrants from the North to Virginia, and those few natives who did not represent the prevailing loyalty to the Richmond government. Governor Peirpoint's limited sphere of influence was further narrowed a year later (in the summer of 1864), when that "damaged soul," Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, called for an "election" in Norfolk to enable the people of that city to decide between Peirpoint's civil government and his own military rule. In spite of Peirpoint's protest and appeal to the "loyal" people of Norfolk,

the election was held, and the result was announced by General Butler, who had won by a vote of 330 to 16. The "Restored Government" lost its control over the counties of the Eastern Shore about the same time. But this farce of an administration continued its existence—used or abused by the Federal Government to suit its convenience—a typical example of the absurd and almost humorous horseplay which characterized the whole of the political disruption and reconstruction in Virginia from 1861 to 1870. One of the remarkable things about it all was that the Federal Government aided or abetted this performance, under color of that article in the Constitution of the United States which says that "The United States shall guarantee to every state of the Union a republican form of government."

Shortly after the "Restored Government" had been set up in Alexandria, nominations were made and elections were held for state and local officers. Francis Harrison Peirpoint was reelected governor; E. L. C. Cooper, lieutenant-governor, and T. R. Bowden, attorney-general. An election was held in one congressional district, the Seventh. It was contested and neither claimant was seated by Congress because of the small number of votes cast. Elections were also held to decide whether Berkeley and Jefferson Counties should become a part of West Virginia or remain in Virginia. The majority of the few votes cast was for annexation with West Virginia. At the same time, however, the two counties elected delegates to the "Restored" Virginia legislature. Although these counties were nominally made a part of West Virginia by November, 1863,¹ their status continued uncertain for several years. When the "Restored" legislature gave place in December, 1865, to a legislature which was truly representative of the people of Virginia, the resolution giving the consent of the State for the withdrawal of the two counties was repealed

¹Berkeley, August 5, 1863, and Jefferson, November 2, 1863; H. J. Eckenrode —"The Political History of Virginia During Reconstruction" in *Johns Hopkins University Studies*, Series XXII, Baltimore, 1904.

because the election was a fraud. But this action was disregarded by the Federal Government, and the counties were lost to the State by the Act of Congress of March 2, 1866. As soon as Virginia was restored to herself, in 1870, after Reconstruction, she carried her claim to these lost counties into the Supreme Court. The court refused to go behind the returns of the election and Virginia lost the case.

On December 7, 1863, the legislature of the "Restored Government" met in Alexandria for the first time. There were six senators and seven delegates. They claimed to represent the counties of Accomac, Alexandria, Fairfax, Loudoun, Norfolk, Northampton, and Prince William, and the city of Norfolk. J. Madison Downey, of Loudoun, was chosen speaker of the House of Delegates. At the suggestion of Governor Peirpoint, this legislature of thirteen members called a constitutional convention to meet in January, 1864. A bill to repeal the law against educating negroes failed to pass. Except for summoning the convention, nothing of importance was accomplished.

On February 13, 1864, the Constitutional Convention met at Alexandria.² It was composed of fifteen delegates "representing" twelve counties. Among the many changes made by the Convention in the Constitution of 1851 were the abolition of slavery, removal of many restrictions upon the rights and privileges of negroes, provision for the disfranchisement of Confederates, and also for the establishment of free schools. It adopted no measure for the enfranchisement of negroes. After the Convention adjourned on April 7, 1864, the Constitution was submitted to the people and was approved by about 500 votes.³

The second session of the legislature of the Alexandria Government began on December 5, 1864. This was its last

²Elections took place January 22, 1864. Very little interest was shown and the vote was light.

³Statement of J. M. Botts in *Alexandria Gazette*, June 15, 1865; Eckenrode, p. 22.

meeting in that city. Governor Peirpoint, in his message to its members, suggested an extensive program of legislation which would carry into effect the provisions of the new constitution in regard to negroes, public schools, etc. These recommendations resulted only in bills that did not pass. The Assembly elected as senators from Virginia, John C. Underwood, for the full term, and Joseph Segar to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Lemuel J. Bowden. Congress refused to admit them, however. The Assembly on February 9, 1865, ratified the Thirteenth Amendment. It adjourned March 7.

The fall of Richmond and the surrender of Lee in April, 1865, left Virginia without a real system of government, since the "Restored Government" was recognized by only an insignificant minority. The people of the State realized that the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia meant the end of the struggle. The soldiers returned to their neglected and devastated farms. Although defeated, the people appreciated the calm which followed the continual tumult of battle throughout the State. They had no great apprehensions as to their political future, since they knew Lincoln's plan for reconstruction. In his proclamation of December 8, 1863, the President had outlined this plan. He had offered amnesty to all, with the exception of a few of the leaders; had recognized those states where "loyal" governments had already been established; and had offered to recognize any state government as reconstructed so soon as one-tenth of the persons who were qualified voters in 1860 should take an oath to support the Union. Lincoln held that the states of the Confederacy could not secede, and were, therefore, still in the Union. They would then function as states of the Union so soon as "loyal" governments could be formed. They would have to accept, of course, the outcome of the war in regard to emancipation. Lincoln in accordance with this plan, had already established governments in Arkansas, Louisiana and Tennessee before the end of the war.

After Richmond was occupied by Federal troops, Lincoln

visited the city and began to plan the reorganization of the state government. On April 6, 1865, he wrote to General Weitzel, who commanded the Federal troops in Richmond, directing him to permit the legislature to meet and recall the troops of the State from the armies in the field. Three days later Lee surrendered. President Lincoln showed a certain willingness to treat with the state officers in Richmond, but unfortunately he was assassinated before he could effect the reorganization of the state government. General Halleck, who now took command in Richmond, refused to recognize in anyway the state officers. For several weeks, there was a period of uncertainty. During this period, the desire for civil government was manifested by meetings of the citizens to discuss its reestablishment. The most important of these was held in Staunton, under the leadership of Alexander H. H. Stuart, of Augusta, on May 8, 1865.⁴ Resolutions were adopted which declared that the people of Augusta accepted the outcome of the war as final; were willing to conform to the laws of the United States; and advised the calling together of a state convention to reorganize the state government.

On May 9, 1865, President Johnson issued an executive order "to reestablish the authority of the United States and execute the laws within the geographical limits known as the State of Virginia." This order declared null and void all acts of the late Confederacy and all acts of the government of Virginia under the administrations of Governors Letcher and Smith. It decreed that the laws and agencies of the Federal Government should become operative in Virginia. And it was further ordered, "That, to carry into effect the guaranty by the Federal Constitution of a republican form of state government, and to afford the advantage and security of domestic laws, as well as to complete the reestablishment of the authority and laws of the United States, and the full and complete restoration of peace within the limits aforesaid, Francis H. Peirpoint, Governor of the State of Virginia, will be aided

⁴A. H. H. Stuart, "*Restoration of Virginia to the Union.*"

by the Federal Government as far as may be necessary in the lawful measures which he may take for the extension and administration of the State government throughout the geographical limits of said State.”⁵

President Johnson gave his ideas in regard to the constitutional status of the Southern States and defined his plan for their reconstruction in his first message to Congress, December 4, 1865, the day on which that body refused to admit representatives of the state governments which he had set up in the South. His arguments for not attempting to reconstruct the commonwealths of the late Confederacy by the establishment there of military government were so strikingly confirmed by later events that they seem almost prophetic. He said, “Now military governments, established for an indefinite period, would have offered no security for the early suppression of discontent; would have divided the people into the vanquishers and the vanquished; and would have envenomed hatred rather than have restored affection. Once established, no precise limit to their continuance was conceivable. They would have occasioned an incalculable and exhausting expense. Peaceful emigration to and from that portion of the country is one of the best means that can be thought of for the restoration of harmony, and that emigration would have been prevented; for what emigrant from abroad, what industrious citizen at home, would place himself willingly under military rule? The chief persons who would have followed in the train of the army would have been dependents on the general government, or men who expected profit from the miseries of their erring fellow citizens. On this principle I have acted, and I have gradually and quietly, and by almost imperceptible steps, sought to restore the rightful energy of the general government and of the states.”

The recognition of the Alexandria government by the President gave Virginia a state government under civil

⁵James D. Richardson, “*Messages and Papers of the Presidents*,” Washington, 1897, Vol. VI, pp. 338-339.

authorities. This government, unlike those established in the states in which the provisional governments had been formed under military control after the War, had already been recognized as the legal government of the commonwealth and a member of the Union.

Governor Peirpoint, who had been the chief executive of Virginia largely by the aid of a generous imagination, and for the convenience of the Federal Government, was now recognized as governor by the people of the whole State, a people who were anxious for some form of civil administration. He accordingly moved his government from Alexandria to Richmond during the latter part of May, 1865. From June 19 to 23, 1865, an extra session of the "Restored," or "Alexandria" legislature met in the capital city. It was the last session of the "Restored" Assembly. There were present three senators and nine members of the House of Delegates. At the suggestion of Governor Peirpoint, this Assembly enacted some much needed laws regarding freedmen, and passed an enabling act which allowed a popular vote on the revision of Article III of the Virginia Constitution of 1864, which had disfranchised the Confederates in the State. The conservatism of the Assembly is further shown when, on the last day of the session, a resolution was adopted commending the reconstruction policy of the Federal administration as "eminently wise, just and proper," and when Speaker Downey, before adjournment, congratulated its members because the recognition of the Alexandria government had delivered the state out of the hands of the "Abolitionists" (the radical republicans). "Virginia," he said, "is now safe. Whatever they may do to other states, thank God they cannot now saddle negro suffrage upon us."

It should be remembered that the Speaker and those whom he addressed were of the same group which had adhered to the Union under the shelter of Federal bayonets in Alexandria.

This utterance, though coming from the foreign and Union element in Virginia, is not surprising in view of the fact that

the negro was not only denied the suffrage in most of the Northern States but was even forbidden to enter some of them with the intention of residing.⁶

Speaker Downey was but expressing the sentiment of the great body of conservative men of the North at that time. But the unfortunate personality of President Johnson, the necessary but unwise vagrancy laws of the Southern states, and the growing need of the Republican party for extreme measures to keep itself in power, brought the Radicals in Congress to the front.

In 1865, Virginia came out of the war freed from slavery, but confronted with a tremendous racial and social problem in the great crowd of freedmen who were poor, ignorant, unmoral, superstitious, easily led astray, and utterly unused to the ways of freedom and self-control. They outnumbered the whites in almost half of the counties, the local units of government in the State. The difficulties of the situation were enhanced by the fact that the State Government was no longer in the hands of those who understood the real conditions, and who were best equipped to administer it.

Before the radical element of the Republican party gained control of the Federal Government, the conservative leaders of both parties in the North looked upon negro suffrage as unwise and dangerous in the South,⁷ and not highly desirable

⁶For example, Illinois, in 1853, put on her statute books a law making it a misdemeanor for a negro to enter the state with the intention of residing. In 1862 this law was made a part of the state constitution. In Article XVIII, Section 1, it was enacted that "No negro or mulatto shall immigrate or settle in this state after the adoption of the constitution."

⁷"This article of the constitution," observed Mr. Munford, "was submitted to the popular vote separately from the body of the constitution, and, though the latter was rejected by over 16,000 majority, the former was made a part of the organic law of Illinois by a majority of 100,590. This vote was taken in August, 1862, and thus, barely a month before Mr. Lincoln's first Proclamation of Emancipation, the people of his own state, by a vote approaching unanimity, placed in their constitution this clause preventing free negroes from coming into their commonwealth." Munford, pp. 171-172.

⁸Oliver P. Morton, in a speech at Richmond, Indiana, in September, 1865, said: "I believe that, in the case of the four million slaves just freed from

in the North. In 1865, there were only six Northern states which permitted negroes to vote: Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Wisconsin.⁸ In those states there were discriminations against them, with the probable exception of Maine. Yet negroes in the Northern States were not an appreciable factor in the population and were far more intelligent than the former Southern slaves. In the Federal capital itself, they were not allowed to vote. On June 8, 1867, Congress passed a bill over the President's veto establishing negro suffrage in the District of Columbia. When the plan was submitted to the ballot, it was rejected by a vote of 6,521 to 35 in Washington, and by a vote of 812 to 1 in Georgetown. But negro suffrage was introduced, and after four years of trial proved so disastrous that Congress had to rid the District of the disturbing element in politics by disfranchising the whole population.

Unlimited negro suffrage had no place in Lincoln's plan of Reconstruction, or in the early congressional plan. It was

bondage, there should be a period of probation and preparation before they are brought to the exercise of political power. * * * To say that such men, just emerged from slavery, are qualified for the exercise of political power, is the strongest pro-slavery argument I ever heard. It is to pay the highest compliment to the institution of slavery." He proposed that the suffrage be withheld from them until immigration had made a good white majority in the Southern States.

In his valedictory address of January 5, 1866, Governor Andrew, of Massachusetts said: "It would be idle to reorganize those states [the Southern States] by the colored vote. If the popular vote of the white race is not to be had in favor of the guarantees justly required, then I am in favor of holding on just where we now are. I am not in favor of a surrender of the present rights of the Union to a struggle between a white minority, aided by the freedmen on the one hand against a majority of the white race on the other. I would not consent, having rescued these states by arms from secession and rebellion, to turn them over to anarchy and chaos. I know only that we ought to demand and secure the cooperation of the strongest and ablest minds and the natural leaders of opinion in the South."

For the above quotations and for a further consideration of this subject, see William Henry Trescot, "The Southern Question," *North American Review*, October, 1876 (CXXIII, 249-280).

⁸New York (and Tennessee) permitted limited negro suffrage. G. T. Stephenson, *Race Distinctions in American Law*, p. 285.

forced upon the South by a group of aggressive radicals led by Thaddeus Stevens as a means of their personal aggrandizement and of inflicting punishment and revenge upon the Southern States. Its effects in Virginia are shown in the pages that follow.

Governor Peirpoint,⁹ though a staunch Union man, was conservative, and for that reason soon lost favor with the extremists of his party. These men, for the most part scalawags and carpetbaggers, desired to gain control of the State for their own purposes by disfranchising most of the whites and giving the ballot to the ignorant blacks. On June 12, 1865, the Republicans of the Radical center, Alexandria, formed a political association. They adopted resolutions to the effect that the State was in danger of coming under the control of secessionists; and that, to prevent this, "the constitution of Virginia should be amended so as to confer the right of suffrage upon, and restrict it to, loyal male citizens without regard to color." This "Union Association of Alexandria," as it was called, also urged the people of the North, and Congress, to regard the Peirpoint government as merely provisional, and to order an election of members to a state convention, in which all "loyal" men should vote regardless of their color. According to Dr. Eckenrode, "This was the first announcement of their advocacy of negro suffrage by the Republican party in Virginia."¹⁰

The state elections in the fall of 1865 resulted in the amendment of the Alexandria Constitution of 1864 so as to extend the franchise to those who had aided the Confederacy, and to allow them to hold office. As a result, the legislature that

⁹Francis H. Peirpoint was born in Monongahela County, Virginia, January 25, 1814. After graduating from Alleghany (Pennsylvania) College in 1839, he taught in Mississippi, studied law, and finally came back to practice at Fairmont, Marion County, Virginia. After his term of office as governor of Virginia expired in 1868 he returned to Fairmont (now West Virginia). In 1870 he was elected member of the West Virginia Legislature, and later served as Federal Internal Revenue Collector.

¹⁰H. J. Eckenrode, *Political History of Virginia During Reconstruction*, p. 33.

met on December 4, the very day that the Virginia delegates were refused seats in Congress, was a very representative and conservative body. John B. Baldwin, of Augusta County, an ex-congressman of the Confederacy, and one of the ablest politicians of the State, was made speaker of the House of Delegates. However, R. M. T. Hunter, William Smith, and many others of like prominence in the Commonwealth, were not members of the Assembly. It was composed of younger and less experienced men. The conservatism of this body may be inferred from the fact that out of the ninety-seven members of the House of Delegates all but one were old line Whigs.¹¹

The attitude of the governor and of the citizens of Virginia was correctly stated in Governor Peirpoint's message to the Assembly, in which he said:

"I have made every exertion to restore to each man in the State all the rights of a citizen. I have done this under a high sense of duty to my country. The people professed subordination to the laws and allegiance, in good faith, to the government, and I believe them to be sincere in their professions. I am satisfied that no state can be governed under a republican form of government where three-fourths of the people, embracing the largest taxpayers, are disfranchised and denied a voice in making or executing the laws of the State."¹²

There was plenty of work for this legislature to do for a war-stricken community. It attempted to win back West Virginia, and, since that was impossible, to effect with that state a reasonable adjustment of the public debt. On March 2, 1866, the Assembly passed by an unanimous vote an act to provide for the funding of the interest on this debt. One-third of it was considered as West Virginia's share.¹³ In order to put an end to the rumors that the Assembly would repudiate the

¹¹Eckenrode, *Political History of Virginia During Reconstruction*, p. 41.

¹²Message, December 4, 1865, *Journal of House of Delegates*, 1865-66, p. 31.

¹³*House Journal*, 1865-66, p. 448; *Senate Journal*, 1865-66, p. 312; *Acts of Assembly*, 1865-66, ch. 9, p. 78; *Ibid.*, ch. 35.

state debt, this legislature passed the following joint resolution:

“1. Resolved, That this General Assembly will pass no such acts of repudiation.

“2. That such legislation would be no less destructive of our future prosperity than of our credit, our integrity, and our honor.”

This resolution of what may be regarded as the last General Assembly of the ante-bellum regime should be carefully borne in mind when considering the Readjuster legislation of 1879 to 1884.¹⁴

The greatest problem that confronted the legislature when it met in December, 1865, was the large number of aimless and vagrant freedmen. The State had been the main battlefield of a long war. Many of her young men were dead; her ante-bellum capital was gone; her transportation system was crippled; her whole system of labor was demoralized. Although want and poverty were everywhere and labor was needed as never before, there was in many localities an abundance of freedmen who understood emancipation to mean exemption from work, and the ability to roam at will, and to live by the aid of the Freedmen's Bureau and petty thieving. Many of them, in order fully to demonstrate their freedom, left their old homes. Often their wives and children were left as a further burden on their former masters. They crowded into the cities. They congregated in some places in the country, killed the cattle and poultry, and devastated the cornfields and melon patches. The whites of the State, scattered through the rural districts with little police protection, if any, were naturally alarmed at this condition of affairs.¹⁵

The reports of the military officers stationed in Virginia show that this tendency among the freedmen was also causing

¹⁴*Acts of Assembly, 1866-67, ch. 73, p. 499.*

¹⁵J. P. McConnell, *Negroes and Their Treatment in Virginia from 1865 to 1867*, p. 45. The newspapers of the period are filled with complaints of vagrancy among the negroes.

them grave concern. They advised the negroes to go to work, and attempted to put an end to vagrancy among them by the use of their authority. An order of June 1, 1865, of General Gregg, who was stationed at Lynchburg, reads as follows, "No freedman can be allowed to live in idleness when he can obtain any description of work. Should he refuse to work he will be treated as a vagabond." On the day following the date of this order, another was issued by General Gregg to the effect that "Able-bodied men will be prevented, as far as it is possible to do so, from deserting their women, children, and aged persons; and where there is no good cause shown why they left, they will be sent back." General Duval at Staunton gave notice on June 2, 1865, "That all negroes now roaming the country will be made at once to break up their idle pursuits and seek employment." Colonel Brown, in a report of January 2, 1866, said that "in the neighborhood of Norfolk, Fortress Monroe, and Yorktown, about 70,000 negroes have been collected during the war. * * * In other districts, thousands of freedmen were roaming about without settled employment and without homes. In localities least disturbed by the pressure or conflict of armies, and where the average amount of land was under cultivation, the crops were suffering from want of proper attention."¹⁰

The wages paid the freedmen were very low. The farmers were without capital and could afford to pay little. On the other hand, the negroes showed no disposition to assume any responsibility for their contracts or their work, and, consequently, their aid could not be depended upon in advance. At the same time, they were encouraged by the carpetbaggers, and sometimes by the officers of the Freedmen's Bureau, to demand wages higher than had ever been paid in the State to either whites or blacks. In speaking of the freedmen, Governor Peirpoint said in his address to the General Assembly, December 4, 1865:

¹⁰The quotations above are found in J. P. McConnell, *Negroes and Their Treatment in Virginia from 1865 to 1867*, pp. 48, 49.

“A prevalent idea among them was that when they were liberated they were to occupy the lands of their former masters. Since they were liberated, many of them were induced to believe that, if they remained with their old masters, they would be in danger of reenslavement—hence they became roving. In many instances, where satisfactory wages are paid, they render fair service; but I think this is not generally the case. The great mass of them refuse to enter into contract for more than a month and frequently leave before that time expires.”

The need for legislation to prevent vagrancy was very great, and the demand for such legislation was especially urgent and insistent throughout eastern Virginia. Under these circumstances, it was natural that the legislature should have attempted to find some relief for the situation. An act was, therefore, passed whose stringency was commensurate with the seriousness of the evil that existed.¹⁷ It was provided that all beggars, except those who were incapable of labor, and all persons in the State who could not support themselves and their families and yet refused to work for the “usual and common wages given to other laborers in the like work in the place where they then were” be classed as vagrants. Along with these were placed all persons who came into the State, and who had no occupation, or visible means of support, and who could not give an account of themselves or their business. If, upon due examination, a person was found to be a vagrant, he was to be hired out for any term not exceeding three months, and the wages used for him or his family. Provision was made for the punishment of the vagrant should he attempt to escape from his enforced employment.

There was no distinction of color made in this law. Although it was intended primarily for the freedmen, the fifth section of the second article of the law undoubtedly refers to the political adventurers who had already begun to swarm into the State in search of plunder. The law resembled

¹⁷*Acts of Assembly, 1865-66, pp. 91-93.*

those enacted in the New England states when they were menaced by a large number of more or less ignorant and vagrant immigrants. It was stringent only for incorrigibles, but was subject to abuse. Although circumstances demanded a rigid law, it was unwise at this time, because it furnished at a critical period in national politics good material for radical Republican propaganda. The practical working of the law was not tested, since it was annulled nine days after its passage by Major-General Terry on the ground that it would virtually restore slavery under another guise. It was, no doubt, on account of the misinterpretation of this vagrancy law that the legislature passed the following resolution on February 6, 1866:

“Resolved, That involuntary servitude, except for crime, is abolished, and ought not to be reestablished, and that the negro race among us be treated with justice, humanity, and good faith, and every means that the wisdom of the legislature can devise should be used to make them useful and intelligent members of society.”

That the legislature wished to make it clear that, in their opinion, the time was not ripe for precipitating the ignorant freedman into the electorate without preliminary training is shown by the further resolution “that earnest thanks are due the President for the firm stand he has taken against amendments of the Constitution forced through in the present condition of affairs.”¹⁸ That this legislature had no desire to reenslave the negro is shown by the act of February 27, 1866,¹⁹ which repealed, for the most part, the old slave code. Even the laws prohibiting the freedmen from owning firearms or other weapons were repealed, in spite of the prevailing unrest among them, and the fear among many of the whites of negro insurrections.

On January 23, 1866, the condition of affairs in Virginia came before the Reconstruction Committee in Congress. The

¹⁸*Acts of Assembly*, 1865-66, p. 449.

¹⁹*Acts of Assembly*, 1865-66, pp. 84-85.



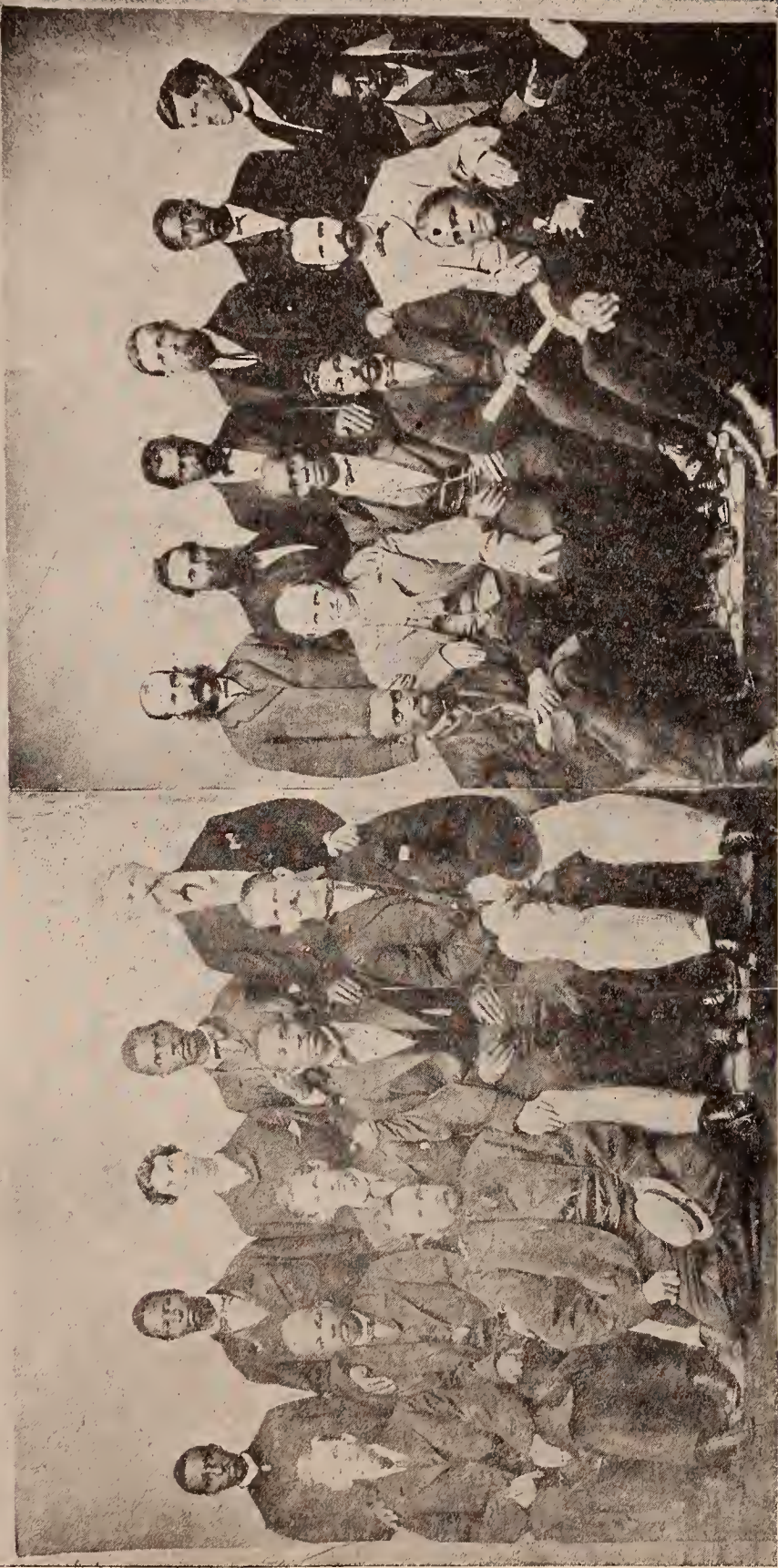
Chief-Justice Chase



President Davis



Judge Underwood



FIRST MIXED JURY OF VIRGINIA CHARGING JEFF DAVIS WITH TREASON, 1866
 INSERTS OF CHIEF JUSTICE CHASE, UNDERWOOD AND DAVIS

great majority of witnesses were Republicans, mostly Radicals, who were not even natives of the State, and in some cases their views were very extreme. For example, one witness, when asked what the Virginians, if left to themselves, would do to the negro, answered, "They would entirely extirpate him from the face of the earth. They would first commence with the Union men and then they would take the negroes."²⁰ This is an example of what the people of the North were induced to believe by the Radicals. Most extraordinary rumors of all kinds were afloat. At this time some acts of violence were committed by members of both races in the State. The state government had wholly collapsed; the country was filled with vagrants; and the whole social as well as economic structure of the Commonwealth was rapidly changing. The party in power also made the mistake of treating the political and racial questions in the South as a whole, in spite of the fact that conditions varied greatly in the different states.

The people of Virginia never blamed the negroes for the War and its evil consequences. In fact, the fidelity of the great majority of them to their masters, and their masters' families, during the whole period of hostilities has always been remembered with appreciation by the white people of the South. The old servants still depended upon their former masters for advice and aid. The press and the official reports of the Federal officers stationed in Virginia indicate an increasing spirit of harmony between the two races from 1865 to 1867. It was the injection of the negroes into politics before they were sufficiently intelligent to assume the responsibilities of the franchise, and the radical influence of the Freedmen's Bureau officials, Union Leaguers, Northern political adventurers of all kinds, and Northern school teachers,

²⁰Reports of Reconstruction Committee, Thirty-ninth Congress, first session, Part 2, Virginia; Reports of the Secretary of War, Thirty-ninth Congress, second session. *Congressional Globe*, 1865-66, pp. 1407-1411.

that caused the friction that existed between whites and blacks after 1867.²¹

The year 1866 was full of anxiety to the people of Virginia. At the end of the previous year, Congress had refused to admit their representatives. Lincoln's plan of early conciliation and restoration, which President Johnson had adopted, was doomed to failure. From the nature of the witnesses and the testimony they gave before the Reconstruction Committee in January, 1866, it was evident that Congress had nothing good in store for Virginia. It was felt that the old South with its traditions had gone; that the eastern part of the State would probably sink into the condition of Hayti; and that whatever might be saved from being "negroized," would only be saved at the price of being "Yankeeized," whatever that word connotated at the time.²²

Emboldened by the increased strength of the Radicals in Congress, their followers were much encouraged to seek control of affairs in Virginia. On May 17, 1866, the "Unconditional Union Convention" met in Alexandria. It was the first

²¹It should be remembered, however, in this connection, that some Northerners who came to Virginia soon gained a sympathetic understanding of conditions in the State, became intimately associated with the people and gained their love and respect; others were liberal in their gifts to the state institutions which were struggling against poverty at that time.

²²In a letter to Dr. Moses D. Hoge of August 16, 1865, Dr. R. L. Dabney, one of the leading theologians of the period, writes from his home in the black belt of Virginia that "people do not enough allow for the poisonous effects of an oppressive government. * * * With this blight so visible now in society, and church, and the killing and banishing of the most of our better spirits, I fear that the independence, the honor, the hospitality, the integrity, the everything which constituted Southern character, has gone forever."

In a letter of March 13, 1866, Dr. R. L. Dabney wrote from his home in Prince Edward County, "It seems to me nearly every person of any standing or intelligence I meet with is inclined to emigration, and only needs an inviting outlet to determine him." Mathew Fontaine Maury, then in Belgium, was much interested in finding a suitable country as a home for those who should leave Virginia. General Jubal A. Early, who was never reconstructed, looked with especial favor upon New Zealand because it was "far from Yankees and negroes." See Thomas Cary Johnson, *The Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney*, pp. 304-307.

state-wide political convention in Virginia since the war. Its chairman was John Minor Botts, a man of no mean ability, who had remained loyal to the Union during the war and had not thereby increased his popularity in his native state. A resolution was adopted by this convention, "That no reorganized state government of Virginia should be recognized by the government of the United States which does not exclude from suffrage and holding office, at least for a term of years, all persons who have voluntarily given moral or material support to rebellion against the United States, and which does not, with such disfranchisement, provide for the immediate enfranchisement of all Union men without distinction of color."

It also declared that, since the Virginia legislature was made up largely of rebels, it was an unlawful body, and that its laws, therefore, should be considered illegal and void.

The convention furthermore took steps to circulate through the State a petition, addressed to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, asking that the Peirpoint government be overthrown, and that the reconstruction of Virginia be made along those lines afterwards adopted by Congress and known as the Congressional plan of Reconstruction. This plan would require the appointment of a provisional governor. Therefore, "They [the signers of this petition] further request," continued the petition, "that the Hon. John C. Underwood, the faithful patriot and distinguished jurist, who has always adhered to the Government with a fidelity which no flattery could seduce, no bribery corrupt, nor fears intimidate, be selected as said provisional governor."²³

John C. Underwood was a native of New York²⁴ who had lived in Clarke County, Virginia, for a few years prior to the War of Secession, and who had become so unpopular there on account of his radicalism that he soon found it more agree-

²³*Appleton's Annual American Encyclopædia*, 1866, "Virginia."

²⁴Born in Litchfield, in 1808, Eckenrode, p. 88.

able to reside at the North. He was a man of little education or natural ability, and was utterly unscrupulous. He returned to Virginia in the wake of the Federal armies and was appointed district judge of Virginia in 1861, with his court at Alexandria. Underwood had already made himself obnoxious by advocating the disfranchisement of all but "loyal" whites; by his activity in confiscating the property of Virginians who had aided the Confederacy; and by urging the negroes to be active in politics.

Besides the adverse testimony before the Reconstruction Committee, there was other material for radical propaganda against Virginia in 1866. In the spring of that year, Judge Thomas, of Alexandria, rendered a decision adverse to the Civil Rights law. He held that the laws of Virginia forbade negroes to testify in cases where only whites were concerned; and that a Federal law could not prescribe qualifications for witnesses in a state. A more serious case was that of Dr. Watson, of Rockbridge County, who was brought to trial in the autumn for the murder of a negro and was acquitted. Whereupon he was ordered by General Schofield to appear before a military tribunal, but was pardoned by President Johnson before trial. Although such cases were exceptional, they were used with much effect in creating an unfavorable impression at the North of conditions in Virginia.

On September 2, a convention was called at Philadelphia to bring together the Republicans at the North and the Unionists at the South. The topic that was most discussed in that body was unrestricted suffrage. Of the Virginia delegation, John Minor Botts opposed unrestricted suffrage, and James W. Hunnicutt, who was destined to become one of the leading Radicals of the state, advocated manhood suffrage, except to "rebels."²⁵ During the last days of its session, the conven-

²⁵Rev. James W. Hunnicutt was a native of South Carolina, who had resided in Fredericksburg, Virginia, for a number of years as the editor of a religious paper. He had owned slaves and had voted for secession. During the War he did not oppose the Confederacy. But during Reconstruction he became one of the

tion, by a small vote, declared itself in favor of manhood suffrage. As Dr. Eckenrode points out,²⁶ it was not until after this convention that manhood suffrage was accepted by the Republican party.

When on December 2, of his unhappy year, 1866, the legislature met in its second session, Governor Peirpoint wisely advised moderation in all laws regarding freedmen and Federal relations, and counseled the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment. But public sentiment in the State was very strong against the amendment, and the legislature could not conscientiously ratify it while there was hope of its being defeated. Besides, Virginia considered it most illogical and unlawful to be treated as a conquered province, and at the same time be forced to aid in ratifying an unwelcome amendment as one of the states of the Union. Consequently, it rejected the amendment on January 9, 1867.²⁷

On March 3, 1867, the Assembly adjourned. On that day the Speaker of the House of Delegates, John B. Baldwin, stated that Virginians were loyal to the Union. He admonished them to show prudence, calmness, and forbearance and to watch and work and wait. "Let us," he said, "realize the fact that after all that has passed, we have still a country to make the most of, to make the best of; and that it is indeed our country to be defended, if need be, against a world in arms." Before this legislature closed its doors, it requested the Governor to call an extra session at once to meet the emergency that would arise out of legislation pending in Congress. Governor Peirpoint complied with the request.

most violent and dangerous of the radical demagogues, and through a newspaper, the *New Nation*, which he published in Richmond during that period, he exerted a very great influence over his party. Eckenrode, 67.

²⁶Eckenrode, *Political History of Virginia During Reconstruction*, p. 49.

²⁷General Schofield attributed the action of the Assembly in rejecting the Fourteenth Amendment to influence from Washington, perhaps to that of President Johnson. General Schofield advised its adoption in order that more radical legislation might be thereby avoided. Gen. John M. Schofield, *Forty-six Years in the Army*.

In his message of March 4, 1867, to the newly convened Assembly, he reviewed the course of Reconstruction. He said that President Johnson's course was commended by both parties and by both sections in the summer and fall of 1866. The Congress of 1866-1867, which had been in session for seven months, had brought in the Fourteenth Amendment. It had been rejected by a hostile South whose press had been "bold, defiant, and bitter." The President and Congress had not agreed. This resulted in the Reconstruction Act of March 2, 1867, "to provide for the more efficient government of the rebel states." He then described Virginia's attitude toward the Union. His judgment is especially valuable on account of his own loyalty to the Union, and on account of his intimate knowledge of the political situation in the State. "If there is any truth in human testimony," he said, "three-fourths of the men of Virginia—farmers, mechanics, and merchants—are as well disposed as any people in the nation. The causes of irritation [to Congress] came from comparatively few. The masses desire peace and its blessings, and have no sympathy with those restless agitators and disturbers of the public peace."

He then laid before the Assembly the Reconstruction Act of March 2 with the advice that a convention be called to make a constitution to meet the conditions therein imposed. The legislature, realizing that the radicals now had control of Congress, decided to act upon the Governor's advice. A bill providing for the calling of a constitutional convention was introduced in the Senate on March 9, and a committee was sent to Washington to learn the wishes of congressional leaders in this matter. They returned with the assurance of these men that the proposed bill was satisfactory, and that a convention, called according to its provisions, would be considered legal by them under the Reconstruction Act of March 2.²⁸

The Richmond Whig had, at an early date, begun to urge

²⁸The Richmond *Dispatch*, March 11, 1867.

the people of the State to accept the inevitable. The Richmond *Dispatch* also counseled them to support the action of the Senate and "to come out and take part in the political measures of the day, and, gracefully submitting to necessity, thus save themselves and their state from the most dreadful fate that ever came upon a nation, namely, the giving up, through inaction, their government and their fates to the colored voters and the followers of Hunnicutt." There were many advocates of inaction in politics at first, but this changed as Reconstruction progressed.

The bill for calling a constitutional convention was passed by a large majority in the Senate. But the Act of Congress of March 23 made a vote on the bill of no use in the House. In the meanwhile, however, the Reconstruction Act of March 2 was being put into execution. Virginia now became Military District No. 1, and Lieut.-Gen. John M. Schofield, who had been in charge of the Federal troops of the Potomac Division, was put in command. He assumed control of the district on March 13, 1867. Reconstruction had come.

Virginia was most fortunate in having General Schofield at this time. He was conservative, wise and just; and it was due to his moral courage and good sense that Virginia was spared the reign of terror that existed in most of the Southern States during the Reconstruction period. His policy was to gain the confidence and support of the people of the State and to interfere as little as possible with the civil authorities.²⁹

The Reconstruction Acts of March 2 and March 23 gave to the freedmen the right to vote for delegates to a constitutional convention to frame a constitution according to the wishes of Congress. The negroes had, however, already made their first attempt to vote on March 5, 1867, at Alexandria, where they had been influenced by the Northern settlers in their midst. The mayor of the town and the local judge asked the advice of the President of the United States, and of the

²⁹John M. Schofield, *Forty-Six Years in the Army*, p. 399. Chapter XXI deals with Reconstruction in Virginia.

Attorney-General, as to the right of these people to participate in the municipal election. As no definite answers were given to the inquiry, negro votes were not recognized. In this election there were cast 1,400 such votes (counted by a Radical agent), 1,000 white Conservative votes, and seventy-two white Radical votes.³⁰ This action on the part of the election officials brought forth much harsh criticism in the North. Similar troubles elsewhere in Virginia were prevented by an order from General Schofield of April 2, which forbade any local election until after registration under the Reconstruction Acts had been completed. In the meanwhile, vacancies were filled by the commanding general.³¹

Immediately after the Reconstruction Act of Congress of March 23 was published, General Schofield appointed a board of army officers to select suitable persons as registering officers throughout the State. In making the selection, preference was given, first, to officers of the army and of the Freedmen's Bureau on duty in the State; second, to persons who had been honorably discharged from the army after having seen service; and third, to "loyal" citizens of the locality in which they were to serve. In fact, the greater part of them were chosen from the first class.

The outlook in Congress was becoming more and more discouraging to the Southern people. On March 19, 1867, Thaddeus Stevens introduced his bill for confiscating the property of "rebels." In a speech advocating this measure as a punishment of the people of the South, he said, "The punishment of traitors has been wholly ignored by a treacherous executive and by a sluggish Congress. I wish to make an issue before the American people and see whether they will sanction the perfect impunity of a murderous belligerent. * * * To this issue I desire to devote the small remnant of my life." It was in the hands of this man and his followers that the fate of the country seemed to rest in March, 1867. In view of such

³⁰H. J. Eckenrode, *Political History of Virginia During Reconstruction*, p. 66.

³¹*Annual Cyclopædia*, 1867, p. 758.

leadership in Congress, and of such legislation as had already been enacted, it is not surprising that the feeling of uncertainty, gloom, and dread should have settled down over the people of Virginia. The description of the conditions that prevailed at the time in Virginia, given in the following extracts from letters published in the *Richmond Dispatch* of March 21, 1867, are typical of those found in many letters and other contemporaneous accounts.

The first letter, dated March 19, 1867, is from Halifax County. "The country," said the writer, "wears now a gloomy aspect, and the farmers are depressed. Before the war many farmers worked a large number of negroes. But it is now the rarest thing to find a half dozen negroes working together. * * * Politically, the people want rest and peace. They have been in war and storm long enough. They feel they have no power of resistance and hence desire to heal the breach between the South and the Federal Government with the least possible delay. True, you sometimes meet with individuals who counsel entire inactivity; but these are the exceptions to the general rule. Submit to any requirements of the conquering party—for it is a necessity—is well nigh the unanimous voice of this region of the country."

The second is a private letter to the *Baltimore Sun*, which says that it was written by one of the most eminent citizens of Accomac County and adds that "there is much reason to believe it too true." "I regret," he said, "that there is nothing pleasant to communicate; general gloom and despondency hang over our entire section, and a fearful looking for what is to come. The prospect is less promising to me than at any previous period. We might nerve ourselves to meet the most stringent of political measures if there was a certainty of its being final. But it seems a disposition to accede to the demands of the dominant party leads to more oppressive demands.

"A want of confidence, a perfect stupor, and an indisposition to attempt anything, or to form any plans for the future,

is the inevitable consequence of the position of matters. God only knows what is to become of us."

The above letter explains in part the amazing inactivity that existed in some sections of the South among the whites during the first part of Reconstruction.³²

Prior to September, 1866, negro suffrage was not favorably considered except by a few extreme Radicals. But as the Republican party came under the control of the radical element, which was destined to bring so much discredit upon the party, not only at the South but at the North, negro suffrage was adopted by that party to bolster up its declining strength. The negro was most unfortunate in the time of his induction into politics (March, 1867). And he was still more unfortunate in his sponsors on that occasion. It would be hard to imagine less desirable political teachers and leaders for the freedmen in Virginia than such men as the carpet-bagger Underwood and the scalawag Hunnicutt. Yet these men, whose radicalism was fast bringing them into prominence in 1865 and 1866, absolutely dominated the negro voters, and, through them, Virginia politics, in the campaign of 1867.

³²See also T. C. Johnson, *Life and Letters of Robert Lewis Dabney*, pp. 301-303. Similar accounts are numerous.

CHAPTER IV

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1867

Registration under the Reconstruction Acts took place in the summer of 1867. Those who had held any state or Federal office, and afterwards supported the Confederacy were disqualified from holding office and from voting. The following were classed as state officials: "Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, Secretary of State, Auditor of Public Accounts, Second Auditor, Registrar of the Land Office, State Treasurer, Attorney-General, Sheriff, Sergeant of a city or town, Commissioner of the Revenue, County Surveyors, Constables, Overseers of the Poor, Commissioners of the Board of Public Works, Judges of the Supreme Court, Judges of the Court of Hustings, Justices of the County Courts, Mayor, Recorder, and Aldermen of a city or town corporation, Escheators, Inspectors of tobacco, flour, etc., Clerks of the Supreme Court, District, Circuit, and County Courts, and of the Court of Hustings, and Attorneys for the Commonwealth."¹

The Commanding General of the District estimated that 70,000 of the whites were disfranchised in this way. Although this estimate is "more ingenious than convincing," as Professor Dunning puts it, it is certain that thousands of the leading men—all who had had experience in administration—were disfranchised.

The number of registrants totaled 225,933, of which 120,101 were white and 105,832, or 47 per cent, were colored. The colored voters formed a majority in half of the counties. But since these were the most populous counties of the State, they were at an immense advantage when it came to representation.

¹Act of Congress of July 19 amending that of June 3.

There were 90,555 registrants in the white section, the northern and western part of the state, and 125,895 in the black section to the south and east. By a strict apportionment on the basis used, one representative to 2,061 constituents, there would have been forty-four representatives from the white counties and sixty-one from the colored counties—in spite of the fact that in the State as a whole the majority of the whites was 14,269. The actual apportionment gave the districts under white control forty-seven representatives to the Convention, and those under colored control fifty-eight.²

When the colored population was enfranchised in the spring of 1867, the Republican party was already organized and in the field. There was no other party in Virginia. Furthermore, that party had two highly developed organizations to bring the negroes into line, the Freedmen's Bureau and the Union League. The Freedmen's Bureau was established in Virginia on June 15, 1865. The State was divided into eight districts, each under an assistant quartermaster. These, in turn, were divided into sub-districts under the command of military officers. The creation of this bureau was the logical result of the obligation which emancipation imposed on the Federal Government. It began its work as a strictly non-political institution and accomplished no little good. But it assumed more and more authority of a political nature and finally controlled practically all the relations between the races. Its influence now caused trouble. This organization not only protected and cared for the freedmen but also impressed upon their minds the debt which they owed the Republican party. The political strength of the institution was great. But more powerful as a political factor was the Union League. It was organized in Virginia late in 1866. Its secrecy and the mysterious solemnity of its ritual made a strong emotional appeal to the colored people. They were taught in the ritual that their only friends were the Union

²Reports of the Secretary of War; Fortieth Congress, second session, Vol. II, p. 294.

Republicans, and that their chief enemies were their former masters who were not of the Republican party.³ They were also encouraged to assert their newly acquired rights in season and out of season.⁴

As soon as the people of Virginia had recovered from the stupefaction into which they had been thrown by the Reconstruction Acts, they began at once to attempt to win the colored vote from the control of the Radicals. But the futility of their efforts is plainly shown by the returns of the fall elections.

There was also a futile attempt made by the conservative colored leaders to win their people from the control of their unscrupulous leaders and to find some basis of compromise with the native white conservatives. The State owes much to the self-control, wisdom and moderation of many such colored men, who, though too much in the minority to accomplish a great deal, did their best to narrow the breach that was rapidly separating the two races. As early as April 15, 1867, a committee of colored men in Richmond invited several prominent white men to give their political views. The meeting was addressed by William H. McFarland, Marmaduke Johnson, and Raleigh T. Daniel, who was introduced by the chairman of the colored committee, Solon Johnson.⁵ Three days later, a great mass meeting assembled in the Courthouse Square in Petersburg. It was called by a number of the most influential white citizens of the town and had as its presiding officer, Robert McIlwaine. A correspondent of the Richmond *Dispatch* thus described the meeting: "The crowd was immense, and the whites and blacks mixed up indiscriminately, and the best disposition was manifested by all present." A series of resolutions was unanimously adopted advocating equal school advantages for the white and colored and equal legal and political rights to both races. The negroes were invited to

³Walter L. Fleming, *Documentary History of Reconstruction*.

⁴The numerous secret organizations among the negroes that now exist throughout the State may have had their origin in part from the Union League.

⁵The Richmond *Dispatch*, April 15, April 16, 1867.

attend the political meetings of the whites and to participate in their deliberations.

Although the people of Virginia did not accept the Petersburg platform as their political creed, it was a long step forward in the compromise movement among the Conservatives of the two races. The *Richmond Dispatch* even went so far as to predict that these resolutions would probably be adopted as the platform of the Conservatives throughout the state.⁶ They were adopted by several local conservative conventions. In Charlottesville, on April 24, 1867, a meeting was called at the Delevan Hospital by a large number of colored men, who invited speakers of both races "to interchange political opinions." Speeches were made by William F. Gordon and Col. T. J. Randolph, who represented the whites, and by Fairfax Taylor and Rev. Nicholas Richmond, who represented the blacks. Harmony prevailed at the meeting with the exception of the speech by Fairfax Taylor, who was reported as bitter and insulting to the whites. In conclusion, Mr. Gordon read the Petersburg resolutions of April 18, to which all seemed to subscribe heartily.⁷ Influential negroes of Cape Charles, Amelia and other counties called similar meetings.⁸ This movement seems, however, to have had little success in winning over the rank and file of the negroes to the Conservatives.

In the meanwhile a new and much more important movement, the "cooperation" movement, was inaugurated. The purpose of this movement was to bring about cooperation between the Conservatives and the Republicans in such a way as to form a new Republican organization that would be less extreme than that led by Hunnicutt. It had the support of the moderate element of the Republican party both within and without the State, and was supported by many of the most influential Conservatives of Virginia. The resolutions adopted

⁶The *Richmond Dispatch*, April 19 and 20, 1867.

⁷The *Richmond Dispatch*, April 24, 1867.

⁸The *Richmond Dispatch*, April 25, 1867.

at a meeting in Albemarle County in behalf of cooperation show the aims of the cooperators. It was resolved, "That having consented in good faith to the reconstruction of the Southern States under the Sherman-Shellabarger Bill, we consider ourselves bound in honor to the unconditional maintenance of the Union of these states, and that we regard the welfare of Virginia and of the other Southern States as requiring that our people should cooperate with the party that will give us protection for life and property, and believing that the Republican party of the United States alone has the power to give us protection, we desire to cooperate with them."⁹

The respectability of the movement is shown by the names of the persons connected with it. Among those appointed on the committee of resolutions at the Albemarle meeting were Col. John J. Boccock, William T. Early, W. F. Gordon, W. H. Southall, J. R. Barksdale, Col. R. T. W. Duke, Dr. A. G. Dabney and Dr. W. C. N. Randolph.¹⁰ There were similar cooperation conventions in a number of other counties of the State, and by the end of July, 1867, cooperation had gained considerable importance.¹¹

Throughout the whole campaign of 1867 the extreme radicalism of the Radical Republicans in Virginia gave much concern to moderate Republicans everywhere. The *New York Tribune* of April 12, 1867,¹² made this comment on the subject: "Far be it from us to advise a campaign of bitterness. We do not propose to influence the negro by exciting in his mind a hatred of his former masters. Nor should we advise any organization antagonistic to those masters. Agitators like Mr. Hunnicutt, of Virginia, may mean well, but their zeal is bitter and offensive. To organize a campaign on the Hunnicutt plan is to abandon any hope of a permanent Union party

⁹The *Richmond Enquirer*, July 2, 1867.

¹⁰The *Richmond Whig*, July 3, 1867.

¹¹H. J. Eckenrode, *Political History of Virginia During Reconstruction*, p. 75.

¹²Quoted in the *Richmond Dispatch*, April 15, 1867.

in the South. We cannot afford to array the white against the black, or the black against the white.”

In April, Senator Wilson, of Massachusetts, came to Virginia in order to deliver his party from the Hunnicutt element, and to form a respectable Republican party around the old Union men and former Whigs.¹³ He did not succeed, however, in disturbing the Hunnicutt organization. In fact, he was too conservative for the Radicals and too radical for the Conservatives. He also seemed to have had an exaggerated idea of the number of men in Virginia who had been true to the Union during the war, and was not as careful as he might have been in his utterances before and during his visit to the State. He had the support of John Minor Botts, who had attempted at an early date to organize a conservative Republican party in Virginia.

After registration had begun in March, 1867, the freedmen became more and more engrossed in politics. The Union League and the Radical agitators, of whom there were not a few from the North at this time, had the negroes completely under their control. According to Gen. Edgar Allen, its Grand Deputy in Virginia, the Union League was “a system of night schools in which they (the negroes) were instructed in the privileges of citizenship and the duties they owed to the party which had made them free and given them exercise of suffrage.”¹⁴ Largely as a result of this political excitement among the freedmen, labor became increasingly more unsatisfactory.¹⁵

On March 20, 1867, the Republican State Central Committee called a state convention to meet in the African Church in Richmond on April 17. About half (forty-nine) of the counties were represented. Of the 210 delegates present at this convention only fifty were white. The assembly was

¹³The *Richmond Dispatch*, April 22, 1867; the *Richmond Enquirer*, April 23, 1867.

¹⁴H. J. Eckenrode, *Political History of Virginia During Reconstruction*, p. 61.

¹⁵The *Richmond Enquirer*, April 18, 1867; *Richmond Dispatch*, July 8, 1867.

entirely under the control of Hunnicutt, who boasted in a bitter speech to the delegates that "the rebels have forfeited all their rights, and we will see that they never get them back."¹⁶ The negro delegates took an active part in the discussions and made some very inflammatory speeches. They even surpassed their white leaders in advocating extreme measures against the native whites. They urged confiscation almost unanimously. On the second day of its session the convention resolved itself into a great mass-convention of negro and white Radicals in the Capitol Square. There was considerable disorder at both meetings of the convention. There were numerous calls for the confiscation of "rebel" lands, cheers for Thaddeus Stevens, condemnations of President Johnson and of the "rebel aristocracy," and disputes between the delegates. A few of the cooler heads among the freedmen counseled moderation. Fields Cook, of Richmond, reminded his people that the whites still had a majority in the State and that harmony would be wisest. Several other colored speakers gave the same advice, but none of them were heeded by the crowd of excited negroes. Similar local Radical conventions were held in the State at a number of places,¹⁷ with the same disquieting results.

The effect of all this radical propaganda upon the ignorant freedmen is clearly seen in the riots and general restlessness among them during the spring and summer of 1867, especially in the latter part of April and during May.

Near the end of April, four negroes insisted upon their right to ride upon a street car in Richmond and were taken off by the police.¹⁸ A riot was narrowly averted. The city recorder ruled that the car company could make such regulations as it chose concerning those who should ride on its cars. But the president of the company decided to remove the restrictions from the colored people.

¹⁶The *Richmond Dispatch*, April 18, 1867.

¹⁷*Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia*, 1867, p. 759.

¹⁸The *Richmond Dispatch*, April 25, 1867.

On Tuesday, May 6, 1867, the United States Circuit Court convened in Richmond. Judge John C. Underwood presided.¹⁹ It was an interesting event and well calculated to produce uneasiness among the white people of the State. In the first place the judge, Underwood, was one of the most bitter and unscrupulous carpet-baggers in Virginia politics. And in the second place, negroes served on jury for the first time in the history of the State.²⁰ This event was unfortunate, especially at this time, as it produced in the minds of the untutored freedmen an exaggerated estimate of their own importance in political affairs, and increased the friction already existing between the races. Nor was Judge Underwood's fiery charge to the grand jury of such a nature as to promote harmony between the different elements in the state.²¹

¹⁹Underwood continued in office as United States District Judge until his death in December, 1874. President Grant appointed Col. R. W. Hughes to succeed him.

²⁰There were six colored grand jurors, George Seaton, Cornelius Liggon Harris, George Simms, Fields Cook, John Oliver and Dulaney Beckley. The *Richmond Dispatch*, May 7, 1867; the *Richmond Enquirer*, May 7, 1867.

²¹This charge was in part as follows: "Gentlemen of the Grand Jury—The circumstances surrounding us demand devout thanksgiving to Almighty God that we, the friends and representatives of the Government of the United States, who last year were threatened with destruction and hunted by assassins in this city for attempting to execute the laws of our country, can now meet in conscious security under the wings of the starry banner which our patriotic Congress has raised for our protection; and we are permitted to meet in this building of everlasting granite, so emblematic of the power and strength of our Government, standing alone and unharmed amid the general conflagration that swept as with a besom of destruction all around it.

"And what solemn associations are suggested by reflecting that in the very rooms we now occupy dwelt the fiery soul of treason, rebellion and civil war, and hence issued that fell spirit which starved, by wholesale, prisoners for the crime of defending the flag of our common country, assassinated colored soldiers for their noble and trusting labors in behalf of a Government that had as yet only promised them protection, burned towns and cities with a barbarity unknown to Christian countries, scattered yellow fever and smallpox among the poor and helpless, and finally, struck down one of earth's noblest martyrs to freedom and humanity.

"Another subject of thanksgiving is presented in the very constitution of your body, furnishing ocular evidence that the age of caste and class cruelty is departed, and a new era of justice and equality, breaking through the clouds

On Friday, May 10, fourteen white and twelve colored men were summoned as petty jurors of the Circuit Court.²² It was before a mixed jury chosen from among these men that the notorious Judge Underwood summoned Jefferson Davis to appear, after his two years' confinement at Fortress Monroe.²³

On the same day that Judge Underwood summoned his men for the petty jury a mob of negroes rescued from policemen one of their number who had been taken into custody for disorderly conduct. Several policemen were badly injured and a number of others were in danger from a shower of stones thrown at them by the mob. The spirit of the mob was shown by a remark of one of its members, who said, "We got Judge Underwood here now; we gwine to do what we please. He'll protect us." They were having the difficulty of newly emancipated peoples in not being able to distinguish between liberty and license. Having been freed from one kind of restraint, they were loath to recognize any restraint at all. After the

of persecution and prejudice, is now dawning over us. And strangest of all, that this city of Richmond should be the spot of earth to furnish this gracious manifestation. Richmond, the beautiful and abandoned seat of the rebellion, looking as comely and specious as a goodly apple on a gilded sepulchre, where bloody treason flourished its whips of scorpions; Richmond, where the slave trade so long held high carnival; where the press has found the lowest depth of profligacy; where licentiousness has ruled until probably a majority of births were illegitimate, or without the forms of law, where the fashionable and popular pulpit had been so prostituted that its full-fed ministering gay Lotharios generally recommended the worship of what they most respected—pleasure, property, and power. * * * But we are reminded that 'where sin aboundeth grace may much more abound.' And in the light of recent changes, may we not hope a material and moral future for this city of Richmond in strong contrast with its awful and atheistic past, and in harmony with the salubrity of its climate, the poetic beauty of its scenery, and magnitude of its water power. * * * I am truly gratified to find so many gentlemen of public and private worth upon the present jury." The *Richmond Dispatch*, May 7, 1867; the *Richmond Enquirer*, May 7, 1867.

²²The colored men summoned were as follows: Joseph Cox, J. B. Miller, Edward Fox, Lewis Lindsay, Albert Brooks, Andrew Lilley, Lewis Carter, Landrum Boyd, Fred Smith, Dr. Walter Snead, John Freeman, and Thomas Lucas.

²³The *Richmond Dispatch*, May 13, 1867. For a description of Davis's arrival and trial, see W. A. Christian, *Richmond, Her Past and Present*, p. 282. Richmond, 1912.

mob had refused to obey the mayor's order to disperse, General Schofield appeared and requested them to go to their homes. When they again refused to go, he had a regiment of soldiers disperse the crowd.

On the next day, May 11, a negro mob attempted to take from the police a negro who had been arrested for being drunk and disorderly. The officers were stoned and fired upon. Federal troops were again called out to rescue the police, and order was finally secured by General Schofield by stationing soldiers throughout the city.

It is not without significance that on the day of the last attack on the police one Zedekiah K. Hayward, a prominent agitator from New England,²⁴ was arrested, with the approbation of General Schofield, charged with inciting the negroes to "acts of violence, insurrection, and war."²⁵ After having urged the freedmen to assert their rights of equality in all things, and to "have high carnival" as soon as their white allies had left the State, he added, "It is useless for me to advise you what to do, for great masses generally do what they have a mind to."²⁶

Throughout the summer months of 1867 the political excitement in Virginia increased. Botts, Peirpoint, and other conservative Republicans refused to recognize the authority of the Republican convention of April 17, on the ground that it was not representative of the party of the State. A call was,

²⁴Hayward was a native of New Hampshire. After leaving Dartmouth College in disgrace, he went to live in Massachusetts. He afterwards left Massachusetts and after wandering about for a time turned up in Richmond as a philanthropist. The *Washington National Intelligencer*, cited in the *Richmond Dispatch*, May 20, 1867.

²⁵The *Richmond Dispatch*, May 13, 1867; the *Richmond Enquirer* of the same date.

²⁶To add to the general confusion all the negro coopers of Richmond struck for higher wages during this week. Gerritt Smith and Horace Greeley, who were visiting Richmond at this time, made speeches to the negroes urging them to desist from idleness and drunkenness. The *Richmond Dispatch*, May 14, 1867, *Ibid.*, May 16, 1867. For an account of the riots mentioned above, see the *Richmond Dispatch* and the *Richmond Enquirer* of May 11, 13, 14, 15, 16.

therefore, made for a new convention to meet on July 4, 1867, in Charlottesville, to organize the Republican party of the state.²⁷ This call was signed by over three hundred men, many of whom were native Virginians of prominence, for the most part former Whigs. The movement was entirely independent of the Hunnicutt faction, and, therefore, threatened to disrupt the Republican party in Virginia.

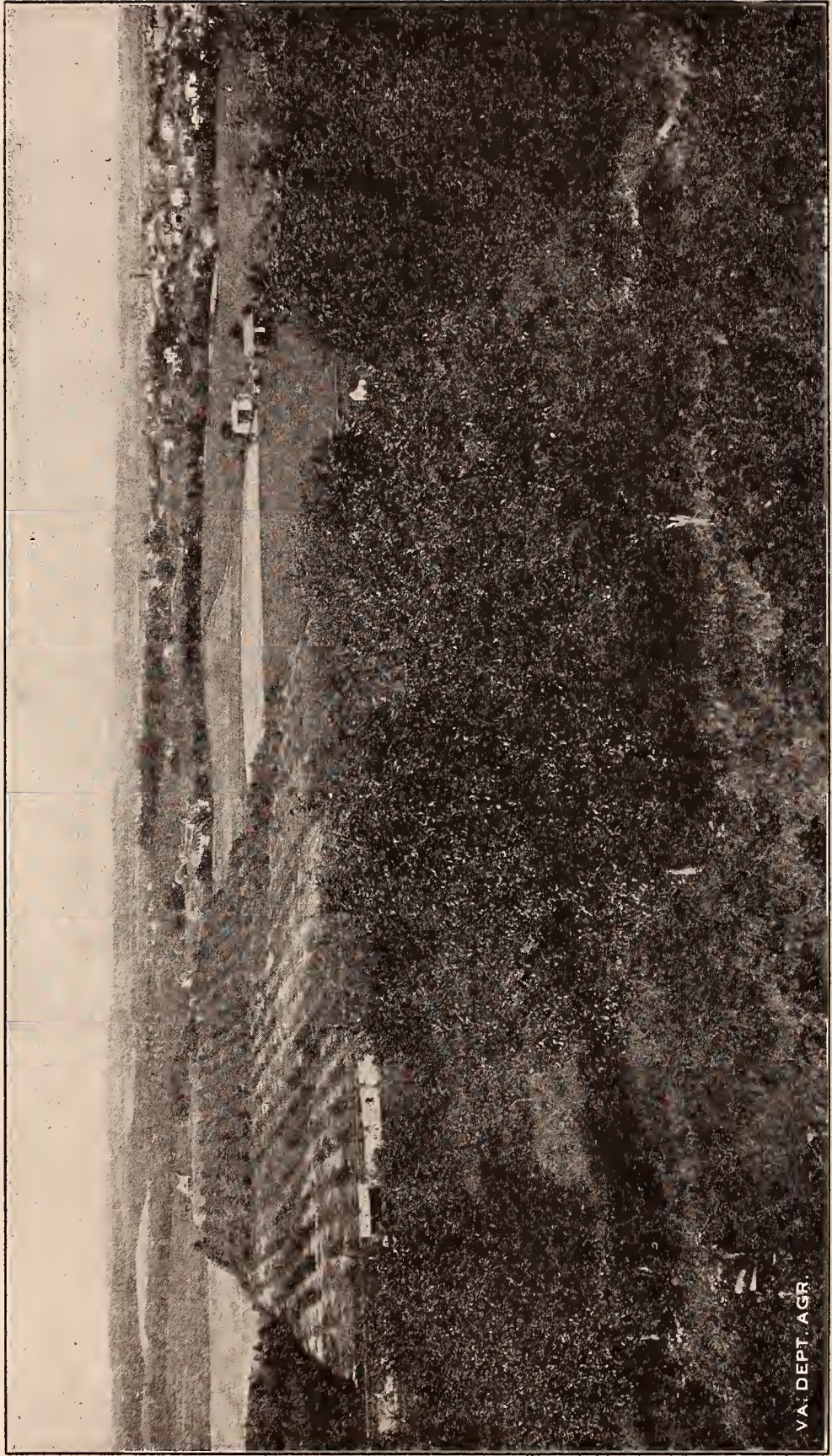
At this juncture the Republican leaders in Congress called upon the Union League clubs in several of the Northern cities to bring about harmony between the two factions of the party in Virginia. As a result, the leaders of both factions met with the mediators from the North in the Governor's home in Richmond on June 16, 1867.²⁸

The Hunnicutt faction made it plain that it would not participate in the Charlottesville convention. As a compromise, it was decided to have another convention at Richmond. It was to meet on August 1, and a party platform was to be made to take the place of that of April 17. Since Richmond had succeeded Alexandria as the Radical center of the State, Hunnicutt had won a decided victory over the more conservative faction of the party. With the freedmen to back him, it would be easy to control a convention in Richmond.

The cooperation movement rapidly gained strength during July and August. The cooperators accepted negro suffrage, but hoped to gain the leadership and thus avoid the dangers of Radical Reconstruction. But the white and colored Radicals in speeches throughout the State were advocating extreme social and political equality. Some went even further. One of the most prominent negro Radicals of Virginia, Lewis Lindsay, in a bitter speech at Charlottesville in July, 1867, stated that the negroes intended to elect a part of the legislature, the members of Congress and the governor of the State; and that

²⁷The Richmond *Enquirer*, May 21, 1867.

²⁸Among those present were Governor Peirpoint, John M. Botts, John C. Underwood, J. W. Hunnicutt, John Hawkhurst, L. H. Chandler, Senator Wilson of Massachusetts, John Jay of New York, and other prominent politicians. H. J. Eckenrode, *Political History of Virginia During Reconstruction*, p. 73.



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appointments should always be equally made between the two races.²⁹ The freedmen had become more radical than their white teachers. The possibility of the more conservative faction of the Republican party gaining their support no longer existed, if it ever did exist. Cooperation was doomed.

On the day before the meeting of the Republican convention of August 1, 1867, the conservative faction of the delegates met and approved of a platform, presented by John Minor Botts, which condemned secession as a crime, advocated the enfranchisement of all Confederates but their leaders, and the punishment of these.

The Republican convention met on August 1, 1867, at the African Church in Richmond. It was a great event for the freedmen of the city. By 10 o'clock they had left the tobacco factories and the streets, and had gathered around the church. At 11 o'clock the doors were opened and the negroes crowded in. Many county delegates, both white and colored, were excluded from the building. The only whites that were admitted were the fifty Radical delegates who had attended the April convention. The convention was called to assemble at 12 o'clock. In the meanwhile Hunnicutt harangued the crowd. He expressed his disapproval of the conservative Republicans and cooperators in no uncertain terms, and warned his followers against the "rebels" who were "seeking admission into the council of the Republican party." "Now," he said, "we tell the strangers that if they want to come with us they will have to swallow a bitter pill. They must swallow the Constitutional Amendments, the Civil Rights Bill, the Sherman-Shellabarger-Wilson Bill, the Supplementary Bills, every Reconstruction Act, the Iron-clad Oath, the 17th of April platform, Wardwell, Hunnicutt, and the nigger; yes, the nigger, his head, his feet, his hide, his hair, his tallow, his bones, and his suet! Nay, his body and soul! Yes, all these they must swallow, and then, perhaps, they can be called

²⁹Charlottesville *Chronicle*, July 2, 1867.

Republicans.'"³⁰ The main duty of the convention, he said, was to endorse the platform of the April convention. This was promptly done.

Those who could find no place in the African Church assembled in "mass convention" in the Capitol Square. John Hawkhurst, a radical, was made chairman. A motion to invite John Minor Botts to address the convention was voted down almost unanimously. The conservative Republicans were again ignored and the April platform was adopted.³¹

At 8 o'clock that night there was a meeting in the hall of the House of Delegates of members of the convention and others who were dissatisfied with the action of the double "mass convention" of the African Church and the Capitol Square. Fields Cook, a colored politician with conservative leanings, was in the chair. They decided not to form an independent organization but to do their best to promote harmony in the Republican ranks. Hunnicutt and his followers held a meeting at the same time in Republican Hall.³²

On its second and last day, the convention met at the west end of Capitol Square. Much radical talk was indulged in, and Hunnicutt, in a characteristic speech, advocated the disfranchisement of all "rebels." The meetings of the convention were very disorderly on both days. As a rule, the Radical conventions, which were chiefly made up of freedmen, were disorderly. The freedmen and their leaders had not acquitted themselves well in the eyes of the country, and had done the cause of universal suffrage no good. Furthermore, the Republican conventions of April 17 and of August 1 increased the freedmen's love for the outward forms of politics; gave them a high opinion of their own importance in political affairs; made them more independent of their former leaders, and more extreme in their radicalism. In some

³⁰The *Richmond Dispatch*, August 2, 1867; also *Richmond Enquirer* of the same date. This is a type of Hunnicutt's speeches of that time.

³¹The *Richmond Dispatch*, August 2, 1867.

³²The *Richmond Dispatch*, August 2, 1867.

places they now refused to admit whites to the Union League and even formed armed organizations.³³

The tumultuous convention of August 1, 1867, marks the turning point in the political history of the negro in Virginia. Although the attempt to bring the colored vote under the influence of the conservative whites through fair means was not abandoned until several years later, the color line became henceforth sharply drawn in politics, with the negroes supporting the least reputable factions in the respective campaigns. The reputable whites who wished to cooperate with them were ignored or insulted. Negro suffrage had come to mean carpetbagism and radicalism. That negro suffrage had come to stay was accepted by all. The whites were anxious to compromise in such a way as not to draw the color line. Had the negroes been content with the suffrage and conservative white leadership, instead of allying themselves with carpetbaggers and scalawags, advocating confiscation and disfranchisement for the whites, and seeking office before they were fitted for responsibilities of that kind, much bitterness and disillusionment in politics might have been spared them. But under the circumstances it was natural that they should have acted as they did. They had just been freed from slavery and were eager to enter into all the privileges of their new estate. Politics, with its excitement, its conventions and speech-making, was very fascinating to these childlike people. The franchise was given them as a kind of panacea for all their troubles. High hopes and ambitions impossible of attainment were held out to them by misguided or unscrupulous demagogues. Furthermore, the Radical leaders represented the party that had been most instrumental in freeing them from slavery at the cost of much blood and treasure, and which was then in complete control of the Federal Government. There were also the Freedmen's Bureau and the Union League.

³³W. L. Fleming, *Documentary History of Reconstruction*, No. 3, p. 4; Richmond *Enquirer*, September 6, 1867; H. J. Eckenrode, *Political History of Virginia During Reconstruction*, p. 79.

During August, September, and October, nominations were made throughout the State for delegates of the constitutional convention which would meet in December—if the act calling it were not defeated at the polls. Political excitement continued. Many freedmen abandoned themselves to attendance upon political meetings; and labor was harder than ever to obtain. The Conservatives had no organized party in the State and not a few were apathetic toward politics. Many of their most influential men had been disfranchised by the “test oath” requirement of the act of Congress of July 9, 1867. The Radicals, on the other hand, were well organized and aggressive.³⁴ Of the Radicals nominated for the convention, about a third were negroes. Most of the conservative Republican candidates were defeated. In Richmond, for example, the names of Governor Peirpoint, Franklin Stearns, and other prominent Republicans who did not follow Hunnicutt, were not considered, and the great Republican mass convention nominated instead the white Radicals, James Morrissey (from Ireland), Judge Underwood (from New York), and James W. Hunnicutt (from South Carolina), and the colored Radicals, James Cox and Lewis Lindsay.³⁵ When the conservative Republicans attempted to hold a meeting to consider the nomination of a special ticket, a mob of freedmen prevented them. The conservative Republicans were too few to have any influence in the campaign.

The election to decide whether there should be a constitutional convention and to elect delegates to the convention (should there be one) took place during October 18 to 21, 1867. General Schofield and his subordinate officers tried conscientiously, it seems, to have fair elections. However, the commanding general was justly criticized for reopening the

³⁴The words “Republican” and “Radical” were used synonymously during this period. The Radical party in the State included most of the negroes, Northern adventurers (the carpet-baggers) and a few native whites (the scalawags). The Conservatives did not really form a party in the strict sense of the word until later. They were the great mass of white people and a few conservative negroes.

³⁵The Richmond *Enquirer*, October 15, 1867.

polls another day in some of the black wards in Richmond in order to give the freedmen a longer time in which to vote. This resulted in changing the outcome of the election in one precinct.³⁶

The returns of the election of 1867 are very interesting in showing the thoroughness of the organization of the negroes under Radical leaders, and the unmistakable race line between Radicals and Conservatives. Of the 120,101 white registrants, 44,017 did not vote. Of the 105,832 colored registrants, only 12,687 did not vote. Only 14,835 of the 76,084 white registrants that voted were for a constitutional convention; and out of 92,507 blacks that voted, all but 638 were for a convention.³⁷ The large negro vote polled indicates the efficiency of the radical machinery. The colored voters were not only marshaled to the polls, but were also instructed how to vote. Their leaders and secret societies saw to it that those who desired to vote for Conservative delegates were prevented by threats, ostracisms, or open violence.³⁸ While there was a very decided color line in the vote on calling the convention—especially on the side of the blacks—there was an almost absolute color line between Conservatives and Radicals in the choice of delegates. The northern and western counties, those having a minority of negroes, elected native white Conservatives; and the more populous central and eastern counties, where negroes were in the majority, elected white and colored

³⁶*Documents of the Constitutional Convention of Virginia, 1867-1868.*

³⁷Hundreds of the best white men of the State voted for the convention. The *Richmond Dispatch* was of the opinion that, until two weeks before the election, a majority of the whites in the State intended to vote for a convention. A number of the most conservative and representative papers in the State had expressed themselves in favor of calling a convention. Among these were the *Lynchburg News*, the *Norfolk Journal and Daybook*, the *Richmond Whig*, the *Richmond Dispatch* and several papers of the Southwest. See the *Richmond Dispatch*, October 30, 1867. For the returns of the election, see *Documents of the Constitutional Convention of Virginia, 1867*. Document No. 5, pp. 51, 53 (the number of registrants by race and county is also shown in this document).

³⁸*Document of the Constitutional Convention of Virginia, 1867*, Document No. 1, pp. 22-23; the *Richmond Dispatch*, December 12, 1867.

Radicals. A contest was now in progress between the white race and the black race. In Richmond, the headquarters of the white Radicals, there were registered 5,382 whites and 6,284 blacks. The vote on the candidates for the convention was as follows:³⁹

FOR CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES

	White Vote	Colored Vote
Johnson	4,772	25
Sturdivant	4,767	21
Taylor	4,785	26
Evans	4,760	21
Sands	4,788	23

FOR RADICAL CANDIDATES

	White Vote	Colored Vote
Hunnicutt	48	5,168
Underwood	48	5,169
Morrissey	48	5,169
Lindsay (colored)	48	5,169
Cox (colored)	48	5,169

Edgar Allen, one of the most prominent Radicals, was elected from Prince Edward County entirely by negroes, with the exception of one white vote.⁴⁰ These are but fair examples of what took place throughout the black belt.

Of the 105 delegates elected to the convention, thirty-five were Conservatives, sixty-five were Radicals, and the remaining five were doubtful. This overwhelming victory of the Radicals greatly increased their confidence and dismayed the whites. Bitterness also increased. Finally, the Radical leader, Hunnicutt, was arrested by the civil authorities in November on the charge of attempting to stir up insurrection among the negroes by an incendiary speech that he had delivered during

³⁹The Richmond *Dispatch*, October 30, 1867.

⁴⁰Speech by Edgar Allen, quoted in Richmond *Whig*, April 21, 1868.

the fall campaign.⁴¹ He was released, however, on bail by the military authorities until after the adjournment of the constitutional convention. Although the Conservatives had laid the blame of the attitude of the negroes in politics upon such white Radical leaders as Hunnicutt, they now began to attribute to the negroes a fair share of the blame for the unhappy situation. Race relations became more unsatisfactory.

As a result of the campaign of 1867, the Conservative party was formed. Prior to December, 1867, the Republican, or Radical party, was the only organized political party in the State since the War of Secession. It was not until the white people of Virginia had seen the negroes marshaled in a body against them by their Radical leaders that they determined to organize a Conservative, or white man's party to protect themselves against the rule of demagogues and their horde of ignorant followers.⁴² The leaders of the old Democratic and Whig parties of former days issued a call for a state convention of men of conservative views to meet in Richmond on December 11, 1867. There were 800 delegates present at this convention, representing all parts of the State. The convention also represented the finest type of Virginia citizens. Among those present were, Alexander H. H. Stuart, president of the convention, R. M. T. Hunter, J. R. Branch, William Kemper, Marmaduke Johnson, Raleigh T. Daniel, Thomas S. Boccock, Thomas Jefferson Randolph, S. McDowell Moore, Robert S. Preston, T. S. Flournoy, James L. Kemper, and Wood Bouldin.

In his inaugural address, Mr. Stuart expressed the views and aims of those present—in fact of the white people of Virginia—when he said, “At the close of the war, we were assured that, upon the repeal of the Ordinance of Secession, the

⁴¹He had said, “You colored people have no property. The white race has houses and lands. Some of you are old and feeble and cannot carry the musket, but you can apply the torch to the dwellings of your enemies. There are none too young—the boy of ten and the girl of twelve can apply the torch. *Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia*, 1867, p. 763.

⁴²The Richmond *Dispatch*, December 12, 1867.

repudiation of the Confederate debt, and the emancipation of the slaves, we would be restored to our rights in the Union; but instead of these promises being fulfilled, a policy has been inaugurated placing the Southern States under the control of our inferior race. We have met to appeal to the North not to permit the infliction of this disgrace upon us. Our rights may be wrested from us, but we will never submit to the rule of an alien and inferior race. We prefer the rule of the bayonet. * * * We desire further to perfect our organization so that all who desire that this shall continue to be a white man's government may be able to act in concert and by a vigorous and united effort save ourselves from ruin and disgrace."

This address contained the main features of the set of resolutions adopted by the convention. It was resolved: (1) That slavery had been abolished, and that it was "not the purpose or desire of the people of Virginia to reduce or subject again to slavery the people emancipated;" (2) that the State should be restored to Federal relations with the United States Government, and that the people of Virginia would not violate or impair her obligations to the Federal Government, but would "perform them in good faith;" (3) that the people of the State were entitled to all the rights and privileges guaranteed to them by the Constitution of the United States; (4) that "to subject the white people of these states to the absolute supremacy, in their local governments and in their representation in the Senate and the House of Representatives, of the black race just emerged from personal servitude—is abhorrent to the civilization of mankind, and involves us and the people of the Northern States in the consequences of surrendering one-third of the Senate and one-quarter of the House of Representatives, which are to legislate over us, to the domination of an organized class of emancipated slaves, who are without any of the training, habits, or traditions of self-government;" (5) that "this convention, for the people of Virginia, doth declare that they disclaim all hostility to

the black population; that they sincerely desire to see them advance in intelligence and material property, and are willing to extend to them a liberal and generous protection. But that, while, in the opinion of this convention, any constitution of Virginia ought to make all men equal before the law, and should protect the liberty and property of all, yet this convention doth distinctly declare that the governments of the states and of the Union were formed by white men to be subject to their control; and that suffrage should be so regulated by the states as to continue the Federal and state systems under the control and direction of the white race;" and (6) that the people of Virginia would cooperate with all men regardless of party in restoring the constitutional union of the states and the continuance of the government under the control of the white race.⁴³

It is obvious from these resolutions, and from the party organization effected at this time, that lines of party and of race had become definitely fixed for the first time by the whites of Virginia since the War; and that a new and aggressive white man's party, the Conservative party, was ready to oppose the Radical (Republican), or black man's party. Attempts to compromise, for the time at least, were at an end.

After the passage of the Reconstruction Acts in March, 1867, the white people of the state accepted negro suffrage as inevitable, whatever they may have thought of its wisdom at that time. They were anxious for peace, and would have accepted the new conditions of defeat without opposition had the Radicals in Congress and in the State not continued to persecute them. The State was placed under military rule, its leading men—all those who had had any experience in administration—were disfranchised and disqualified from holding office; its people were threatened with new punishments and humiliations; and to the uncertainty and dread caused by the action of Congress was added the agitation among the negroes by outsiders. In spite of these discouragements the whites

⁴³Current newspapers; *Annual Cyclopædia*, 1867, p. 763.

attempted to win the confidence and leadership of the negroes, and to cooperate with the best element in the Republican party in bringing the State back into the Union upon a firm, conservative basis. But the Republican party, which was for the most part radical in Virginia, was the victorious party in the Union, which held the reins of government. By means of the Freedmen's Bureau and the Union League, it gained complete control over the freedmen from the beginning, and increased its hold upon them by vague promises of land and of office. The Radical program consisted not only of extending all civil and political rights to all freedmen, but also of excluding all but a few whites from the franchise and from office. The purpose of the Radicals was made clear in the speeches of their leaders, Hunnicutt, Underwood and others, and in the conduct of these men in the Republican conventions of April 17 and August 1, 1867. Compromise and cooperation were no longer possible. Carpetbaggers, scalawags, and negroes had drawn the color line in politics. The whites therefore, organized the Conservative party to meet the new situation.

CHAPTER V

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION OF 1867-1868

In accordance with the order of the commanding general of the District, the Convention assembled in the hall of the House of Delegates of the capitol on December 3, 1867. The election of October resulted in the choice of the most heterogeneous and remarkable assortment of lawmakers that ever assembled in the Commonwealth. There were native Virginians, white and colored, and men from beyond her borders; there was a delegate, a Northerner, who had commanded a company of negro troops in the Federal army against the people of the State; there was a deserter from the Confederate army; there were adventurers; there were ex-slaves; there were educated men and also ignorant men who could speak the English language only in dialect. A contemporaneous account of the personnel of the Convention, given in the *Richmond Dispatch* of April 20, 1868, is as follows:

“The Convention consisted of one hundred and five members, of whom some thirty-five were Conservatives, some sixty-five were Radicals, and the remainder doubtful. The Radicals were composed of twenty-five negroes, fourteen native-born white Virginians, thirteen New Yorkers, one Pennsylvanian, one member from Ohio, one from Maine, one from Vermont, one from Connecticut, one from South Carolina, one from Maryland, one from the District of Columbia, two from England, one from Ireland, one from Scotland, one from Nova Scotia, and one from Canada. Of the fourteen white Virginians belonging to this party, some had voted for secession, others had been in the Confederate service, others were old men whose sons had been in the Confederate army;

hardly one had a Union record. A large proportion of the Northerners and foreigners had drifted here in some non-combatant capacity."¹

The officers of the Convention were equally as miscellaneous a group. Its chairman was John C. Underwood of New York, and the body over which he presided has been known in history, therefore, as the "Underwood Convention," and the constitution that it made, as the "Underwood Constitution;" its secretary and sergeant-at-arms were from Maryland; the stenographer, an Irishman, was lately from Maryland also; the assistant clerk was from New Jersey; the chaplain was from Illinois; the two doorkeepers were negroes; the boy pages, with one exception, were negroes or sons of Northern men or foreigners; and the clerks of the twenty standing committees, with two or three exceptions, were Northern men or negroes.²

The most prominent of the white Radicals were John C. Underwood, Judge Edward Snead, John Hawxhurst, Edgar Allen, Charles H. Porter, and David B. White. The leading negro Radicals were Thomas Bayne, Lewis Lindsay, and Wil-

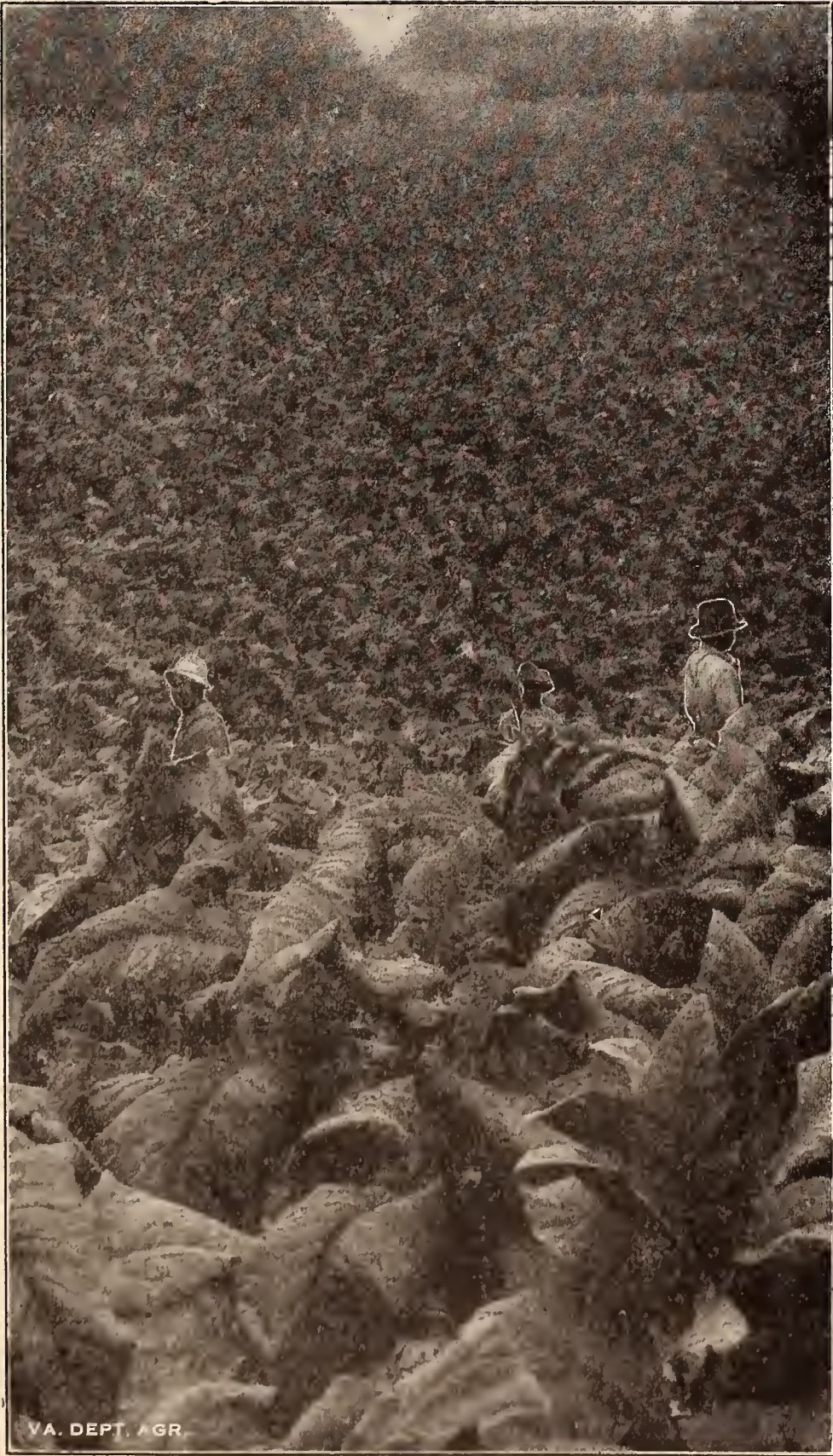
¹For the names of the carpetbagger delegates see the *Richmond Enquirer*, April 11, 1868. The following negro delegates were elected to the Convention:

William H. Andrews, Isle of Wight, Surry; James D. Barrett, Fluvanna; Dr. Thomas Bayne, Norfolk city; James W. D. Bland, Prince Edward; William Breedlove, Middlesex, Essex; John Brown, Southampton; David Canada, Halifax; James B. Carter, Chesterfield, Powhatan; Joseph Cox, Richmond city; William A. Hodges, Princess Anne; Joseph R. Holmes, Charlotte, Halifax; Peter K. Jones, Greensville, Sussex; Samuel F. Kelso, Campbell; Lewis Lindsay, Richmond city; Peter G. Morgan, Petersburg city; William S. Moseley, Goochland; Frank Moss, Buckingham; Edward Nelson, Charlotte; Daniel M. Norton, James City, York; John Robinson, Cumberland; James T. S. Taylor, Albemarle; George Teamoh, Norfolk (county), Portsmouth city; Burwell Toler, Hanover, Henrico; John Watson, Mecklenburg; F. W. Poor, Orange.

Thomas Bayne, a dentist, was a runaway slave from the South who had been a resident of Boston for a number of years; Hodges was born in Virginia, but had been living in New York; Poor was from New York. In many cases a county had both white and colored delegates.

Of the thirty-five white Conservatives, one refused to serve, one was excluded from the Convention by the Radicals, and one was expelled by them.

²The *Richmond Dispatch*, April 20, 1868.



TOBACCO FIELD

liam A. Hodges. Several negro delegates took active part in most of the debates. Dr. Bayne, of Norfolk, was particularly talkative.

The Conservatives were led by John L. Marye, Jr., and Eustace Gibson. Most of them were new men in the political affairs of the State. There was no lack of ability among them, however. Although hopelessly in the minority, they served as a check upon the majority, and they were ready to investigate and to expose any false or dishonest move on the part of the Radicals. Whenever there was a division among the Radicals on account of the extreme measures of the negroes and their white allies, they were enabled to aid the less extreme faction in defeating much obnoxious legislation. Their superior education and mental ability gave them an advantage in debate over their opponents far in excess of their numerical strength.

The first few weeks were occupied in organization, and in general political discussions, for the most part outside of the province of the Convention. For instance, much time was spent in discussing the Reconstruction policy of Congress. There was a long debate over resolutions introduced in the Convention expressing approval of the action of Congress in impeaching President Johnson. There were other discussions equally futile.

It was not until January that the committees started to make their reports, and that work on the constitution began. When the first section of the preamble was brought up for discussion on January 6, 1868, James W. D. Bland (colored) moved, that, in place of the word "men" in the clause, "that all men are by nature equally free and independent," as reported from the committee, there should be substituted the words "mankind, irrespective of race or color." The motion was defeated through the influence of Thomas Bayne (also colored) who had pledged himself to his constituents that he would "endeavor to aid in making a constitution that

should not have the word black or the word white in it.”³ But when the debates over mixed schools were in progress, Bayne proposed an amendment to the committee’s plan so as to place whites and blacks in the same schools. The amendment failed to get the support of enough Radicals to be adopted, in spite of the efforts on the part of the negro delegates, and the threats of Bayne, Lindsay, Hodges, and others, that, if it were not supported by the white Radicals, the negroes would withdraw from the Republican party.⁴

The important question of taxation occupied much of the time of the Convention, and the tax system of the State received some much needed reform. The most important service which it rendered was the provision which it made in the constitution for the establishment of a state public free school system.

The question overshadowing all others in the debates of the Convention was that of suffrage. It was the subject of discussion throughout the session. The first long debate on it was occasioned by the consideration of that section of the bill of rights which affirmed, “That all elections ought to be

³*Debates of the Constitutional Convention of Virginia, 1867*, p. 251.

⁴The negroes threatened more than once to desert their white allies. On one of these occasions, Bayne, who had made the threat, was answered by one of the leading white Radicals in part as follows:

“He (Bayne) makes no recognition of any white men, but wants a party, so far as his remarks can be understood, to be composed entirely of colored men, in order, as I suppose, as he thinks that he might be the leader and head of them. I do not say that he would, but he might. It is for us to show that there shall be no division between these two classes of the Republican party. It must be clearly known that loyalty must be the only distinction; and I say here frankly, that the white loyal men of Virginia cannot get along twenty-four hours without the colored men of Virginia; and, I say, on the other hand, that the colored men of Virginia cannot get along without the white loyal men of Virginia, and I ask if there is any one who has the hardihood to deny it. We are all in the same boat together. * * *

“And so shall the colored people and the loyal white men of Virginia say, in one chorus, ‘Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, we are together, one and indivisible and inseparable, for the procuring and perpetuation of civil and political rights to all men, of whatever shade or color of skin.’ ” *Debates*, p. 545.

free, and that all men, bearing sufficient evidence of permanent common interest with, and attachment to, the community have the right of suffrage." John Hawxhurst moved that this be amended by the substitution, "That all elections ought to be free; and that all men (not disqualified by crime, insanity or idiocy) have the inherent right of suffrage."⁵ The doctrine of the inherent right to vote and to enjoy other political privileges was warmly upheld by the negroes and some of the white Radicals, but it was repudiated by the Conservatives and moderate Radicals. Hawxhurst's motion was defeated by a vote of 47 to 82.⁶

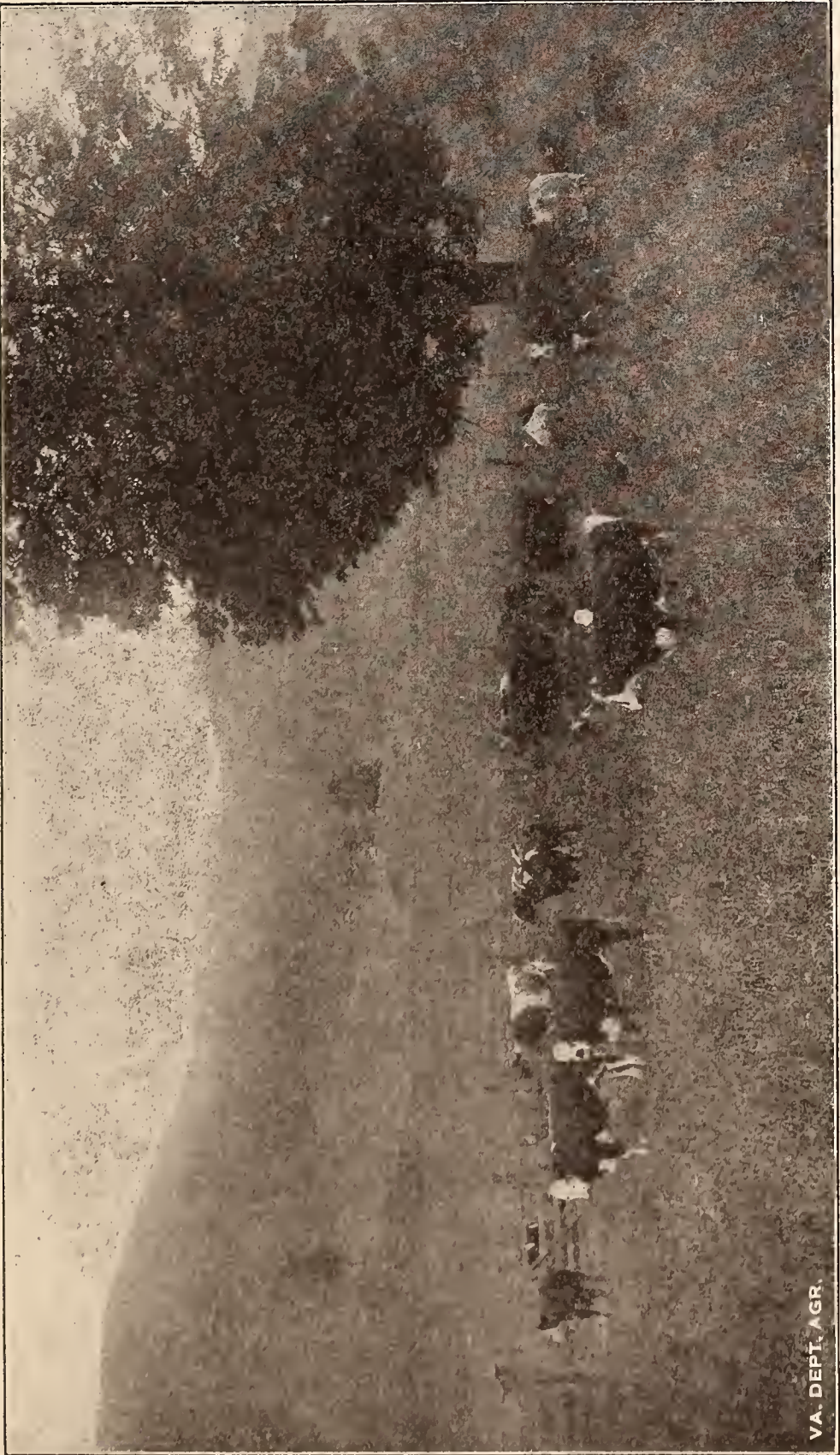
On January 14, General B. F. Butler, of Massachusetts, spoke before the Convention, upon the invitation of the Radicals. After explaining to that body, in the most paternal fashion, just how a constitution should be made, he advised the enfranchisement of all freedmen, and the disfranchisement, not only of those Confederates who had held civil or military positions, but also of those who had been prominent in business affairs before and during the war, such as directors of corporations, presidents of banks, etc. He advocated an educational test for the franchise like that which existed in Massachusetts—not that those who could qualify in this manner would be more capable of using rightly the ballot, but that such a test would encourage the young men of the State to learn to read and write. He hastened to add, however, that he did not think that it would be wise to apply such a test at that time or for a number of years. "I would not apply it to a man who has the right to vote at the present time to save my right hand," he said.⁷

Two days later, Judge Underwood, in one of his characteristic speeches, which was very insulting to the Conservatives, moved that all negroes and women be admitted to the suffrage.

⁵*Documents of the Constitutional Convention of Virginia, 1867, No. XV, pp. 107-109.*

⁶*Journal of the Convention, p. 102.*

⁷*Debates of the Convention, p. 435.*



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BLUE GRASS AND CATTLE SCENE

His followers did not approve of woman suffrage, however, and the motion was defeated. In the course of the debate, John L. Marye said that the Radicals, instead of teaching the colored people lessons of thrift, honesty, and dignity, were encouraging them to entertain vain hopes in politics and were deluding them into thinking that they could "live without labor and thrive without effort."⁸

Finally provision was made for enfranchising all negroes and the attention of the Radicals was centered on the various measures introduced for disfranchising the whites, who had been guilty of "complicity with rebellion."⁹ As the session drew to a close, the Radicals grew more insistent upon the disfranchisement of the whites of the States, and the debates became, accordingly, more stormy. The majority report of the Committee on the Elective Franchise and Qualifications for Office¹⁰ was the chief subject of debate during March and April. The article, as reported by the committee, and afterwards adopted by the Convention, disqualified from holding office and from jury service practically every white man in the State, and disfranchised several thousand of the most capable white men. The article was so amended in the Convention as to carry the disfranchisement even further than the committee had recommended. At the same time, negroes were given the right to vote without qualification. Hunnicutt, fearing that the constitution would be rejected by the electorate as then constituted, advocated the disfranchisement of thirty thousand more whites than had already been provided for in the constitution.¹¹ More drastic measures were prevented by the alliance of some of the most conservative Radicals, who were guided by General Schofield and conserva-

⁸*Debates*, p. 458; the *Richmond Dispatch*, January 17, 1868.

⁹See for example *Documents of the Convention*, No. XXVII.

¹⁰This standing committee was composed of seven Radicals, two of whom (Bland and Moseley) were colored, and four Conservatives, one of whom was removed from the committee after his appointment. James Hunnicutt was its chairman.

¹¹The *Richmond Enquirer*, March 4, 1868.

tive Republicans at the North, with the Conservative delegates. There was also a consciousness in the minds of the more extreme Radicals that, after all, the whites were a majority in the State, and that it would be wiser to be prudent.

The Convention came to a close on April 17, 1868. Its adjournment was made necessary by the refusal of General Schofield to approve any bill providing for the payment of the expenses of the Convention after April 6. During its closing hours the constitution was adopted as a whole by a vote of 51 to 36. A few Radicals, one of them colored, voted with the Conservatives against its adoption.

By the clauses of the constitution disfranchising all ex-officers of both state and local governments, requiring the test oath as a qualification for office, and excluding those thus disfranchised and disqualified from jury service, the destiny of the State was left in the hands of the densely ignorant freedmen, who were without experience in government, and utterly lacking in the traditions of political morality,—a people who, by their very nature and training, were an easy prey to unscrupulous demagogues.¹²

On the day of its adjournment, General Schofield appeared before the Convention and made an earnest plea for the reconsideration of Article III of the constitution, that referring to the franchise and to office-holding.¹³ He said: "I deem the question of the oath of office of so vital importance that I believe it to be my duty to give my views on the subject. It has been necessary for me, during the past year, to select registering officers as well as persons to fill the various civil offices in the State.

"I have been able to find in some counties only one, in others two, and others three persons of either race able to read and write who could take the test oath. Most of the local

¹²For clauses of the constitution referring to the elective franchise and qualifications for office, see Appendix No. 1. Special attention is called to Sections 1, 3, 6 and 7 of Article III.

¹³The privilege of the floor was extended to the commanding-general and to his staff at the beginning of the session. *Journal*, p. 32.

offices give very small compensation, such that even a laboring man could not afford to go to another part of the State for the purpose of accepting them. I have no hesitation in saying that it will be practically impossible to administer the government under your constitution and with that provision, and that the retention of that provision will be fatal to the constitution, and probably fatal to those who are responsible for the existence of that objectionable feature. I say this, lest some of you may be deceived as to the wishes of the people of the country at large, or those whom you regard as your friends in Congress. They will not and cannot sustain you in going so far beyond what is either authorized or required by the acts of Congress.’¹⁴

After his departure, General Schofield was bitterly attacked by Bayne, Lindsay, and others for his advice, and no heed was taken of his counsel.

In a letter to General Grant, written the next day, April 18, 1868, General Schofield described the work of the Convention and expressed the belief that no satisfactory Union party could be organized upon the basis of the present Radical party and its constitution in the State, and advised that the constitution be allowed to “fall and die where it is—not to submit it to the people at all;” that a provisional government be organized; and that, after the government had been formed upon a loyal basis, another convention be called to draw up a constitution “fit to be ratified by the people of the State and approved by Congress and the country at large.” It was his opinion that the negroes and their associates would insist upon the unqualified indorsement of the constitution and this, he said, “the respectable whites will not give.” General Schofield also expressed his fear that the “late convention will be reproduced in the legislature, a large majority being either worthless Radicals, white and black, or bitter opponents of reconstruction upon the Congressional plan. The danger is that we will have on our hands, not only one big elephant in the con-

¹⁴The Richmond *Whig*, April 18, 1868.

stitution, but a host of little ones in the shape of officers-elect who are not fit to be installed—a prospect not very encouraging, at least.” In a paragraph of this letter, General Schofield showed the spirit and purpose of the Radicals of the Convention as follows:

“The same baneful influence that secured the election of a majority of ignorant blacks, and equally ignorant or unprincipled whites, to the Convention, has proved sufficient to hold them firmly to their original purpose. They could only hope to obtain office by disqualifying everybody in the State who is capable of discharging official duties, and all else to them was of comparatively slight importance. Even the question whether their constitution will be ratified or rejected, they treat with indifference. Congress, they say, will make it all right anyway.”¹⁵

If the Republican Federal officer in command of the District was so completely discouraged and disgusted with the progress of Reconstruction in Virginia under the Congressional plan, one need scarcely marvel that the respectable white population of the State (now District No. 1) were opponents of the system of reconstruction that threatened the very existence of their civilization.

During the final debate on the constitution, several of the most able and far seeing Radicals opposed its adoption. Most prominent of these were Judge Snead, Dr. Eastham, and Edgar Allen. They warned the Radicals, especially the colored delegates, that extreme measures against the white people of the State would only mean a reaction that would be disastrous to those that employed them. The following extract from one of these speeches by Edgar Allen, who was born in England, had been for many years a resident of the North, and owed his seat in the Convention to the negroes of Prince Edward County, shows how outside influence was brought to bear on the Convention throughout its session and

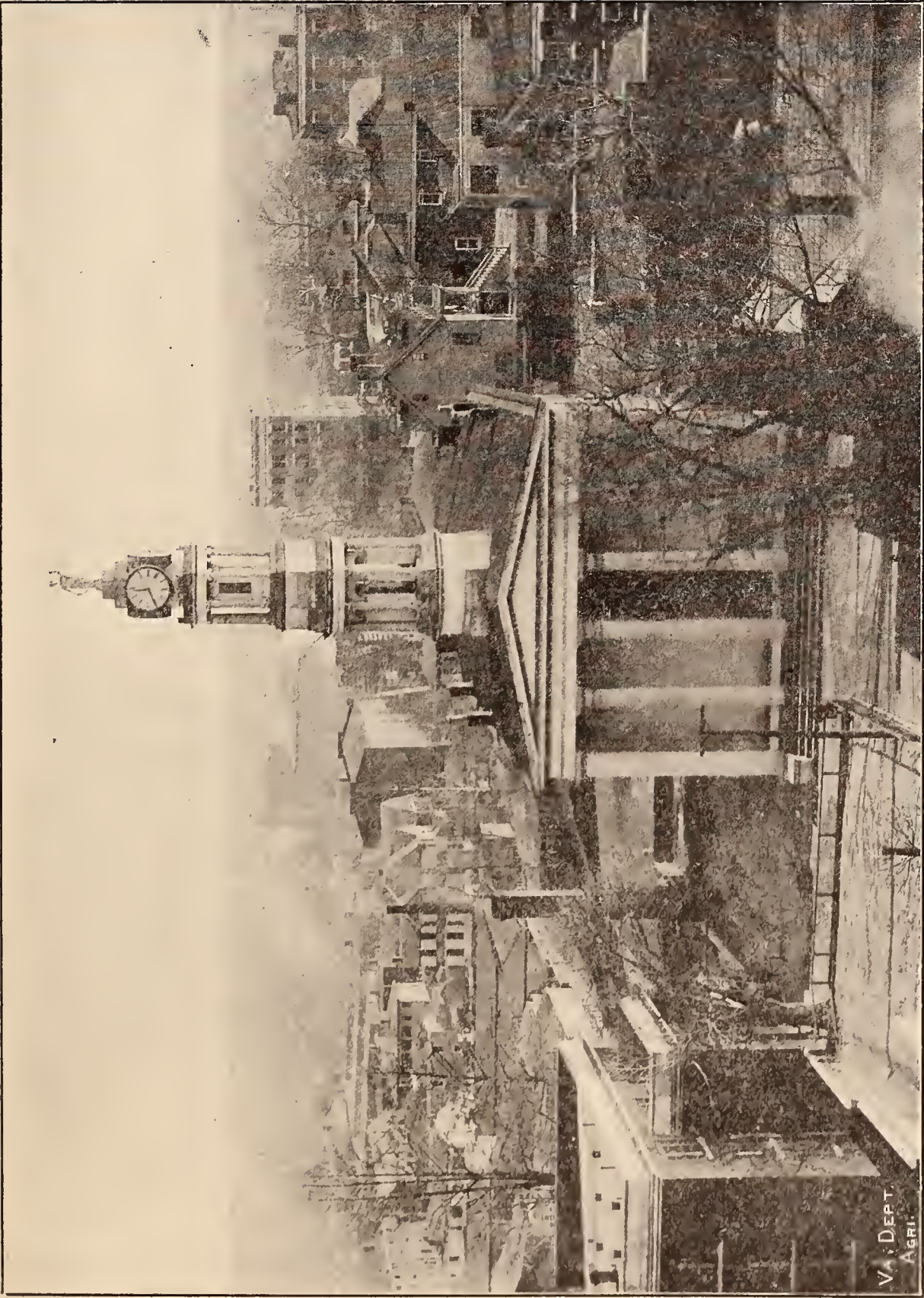
¹⁵Schofield, *Forty-six Years in the Army*, p. 400.

the fruitlessness of that influence in affecting the legislation of that body:

“Ignoring the plan set down for our guidance, a majority of the members of the Convention have drafted a clause which never can and never will be indorsed by the vote of any man who has the least feeling of regard for the honor of his native state; a clause which not only fixes the degradation of those men who bravely fought for what they believed to be their birthright, but which also seals the doom of every colored man in this Commonwealth. I warn you—I mean you colored men * * * that if the constitution now about to be submitted to you should ever chance to be adopted, the only boon you secure to yourselves is to have the power for a few short years of rewarding men who are only ambitious to receive your gifts; and the only legacy you will leave to your children will be the hatred of every white man among whom they live. Again and again, I warn you. Don’t be misled by a set of men who, instead of working for your good, have endeavored to frame a constitution for Virginia which will simply make her a great rendezvous for adventurous foreigners, to come here and live upon the fat of the land, with no other attachment to you or your state than the love of office and the per diem.”¹⁶

By excluding the only element in the State competent to fill the offices, the proposed constitution secured the state and local offices for the Radicals. But this was not all. It purposed to increase further the power of the Radicals by doubling the number of offices, by decentralizing the state government, and by having the local officers chosen by popular vote. In this way, the forty-three black counties, the most populous of the State, would be under the control of negro office-holders and their carpetbag allies. The legislature would be a repetition of the convention. These numerous officers were to be elected under a township system which was copied from that of New

¹⁶The Richmond *Whig*, April 21, 1868. For a similar speech by Judge Snead, see the Richmond *Enquirer*, April 17, 1868.



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England, and which was entirely unsuited to the sparsely settled counties of Virginia. The number of officers in each county was increased from about twenty to not less than forty-eight—all elected by popular vote. Most of the principal state officers were to be elected by the legislature, which, in turn, as General Schofield suggested, might greatly resemble the Convention. The election, tenure of office, and salary of judges, were placed in the hands of the legislature. Although these were the most objectionable features of the constitution, there were many others that were not welcomed by the people. The new system of government was more expensive and cumbersome than the former one. The provision for a system of public free schools before 1876 to take the place of free schools for the poor under the “literary fund” system, though it proved a blessing, was a great financial burden at that time and was not cordially received by many. Voting by ballot, which was introduced in the place of the old *viva voce* method, was considered cowardly and unmanly, and the secrecy which it encouraged was thought to be conducive of fraud.

A sufficiently convincing illustration of what would have taken place had this constitution been adopted in its entirety is found in a report of November 21, 1869, of General Stoneman (who had succeeded General Schofield as Commanding General of District No. 1) to the Adjutant General.¹⁷ As the result of the Act of Congress of February 8, 1869, requiring a more stringent oath of those elected to office, there were many vacancies in state and local offices which were at that time filled by the Commanding General. According to General Stoneman’s report, of the 5,446 offices in the State, 2,613 were

¹⁷On June 1 General Schofield was called by President Johnson to fill the office of Secretary of War, left vacant by E. M. Stanton’s resignation when Johnson’s impeachment failed. His successor, General Stoneman, was an able and conscientious officer. But on account of the increased stringency of his orders from Washington, he was forced to be more severe in his administration than his predecessor had been. General Stoneman was removed on March 5 and was succeeded by General Canby, who assumed command in Virginia on April 20, 1869, and remained in control until Virginia was restored to the Union.

then vacant. Of the officers already appointed, many had not accepted, and many others would be unable to take the oath of office. Only a few native white Virginians could take the oath because, as General Stoneman said, nearly every one gave "aid, countenance, counsel, or encouragement to persons engaged in armed hostility to the Federal government, and once having engaged in war, probably no portion of the Southern people, old and young, male and female, were more earnest in its prosecution." A test oath, therefore, such as that required by the Underwood Constitution, would have excluded practically the whole white population from holding office. After describing the impossibility of securing officers under the oath imposed by Congress, similar to that imposed by the Underwood Constitution, General Stoneman ended his report with this striking comment upon the political outlook for Virginia under the proposed constitution:

"The offices in the state have not been filled by competent persons; they certainly cannot be filled when the restrictions of any one party are to be observed and complied with, as will be the case upon the adoption of the proposed constitution, under which it is desired by some that the people of Virginia shall be forced to live, and to the requirements of which they are expected to consent."¹⁸

The Underwood Convention of 1867-1868 and the constitution which it advocated, taught the people of the North what Radicalism meant in Virginia, and made certain the victory for the Conservatives in the campaign of 1869, which brought Virginia back into the Union, free from Radical-negro rule.

¹⁸The Richmond *Enquirer*, April 8, 1869.

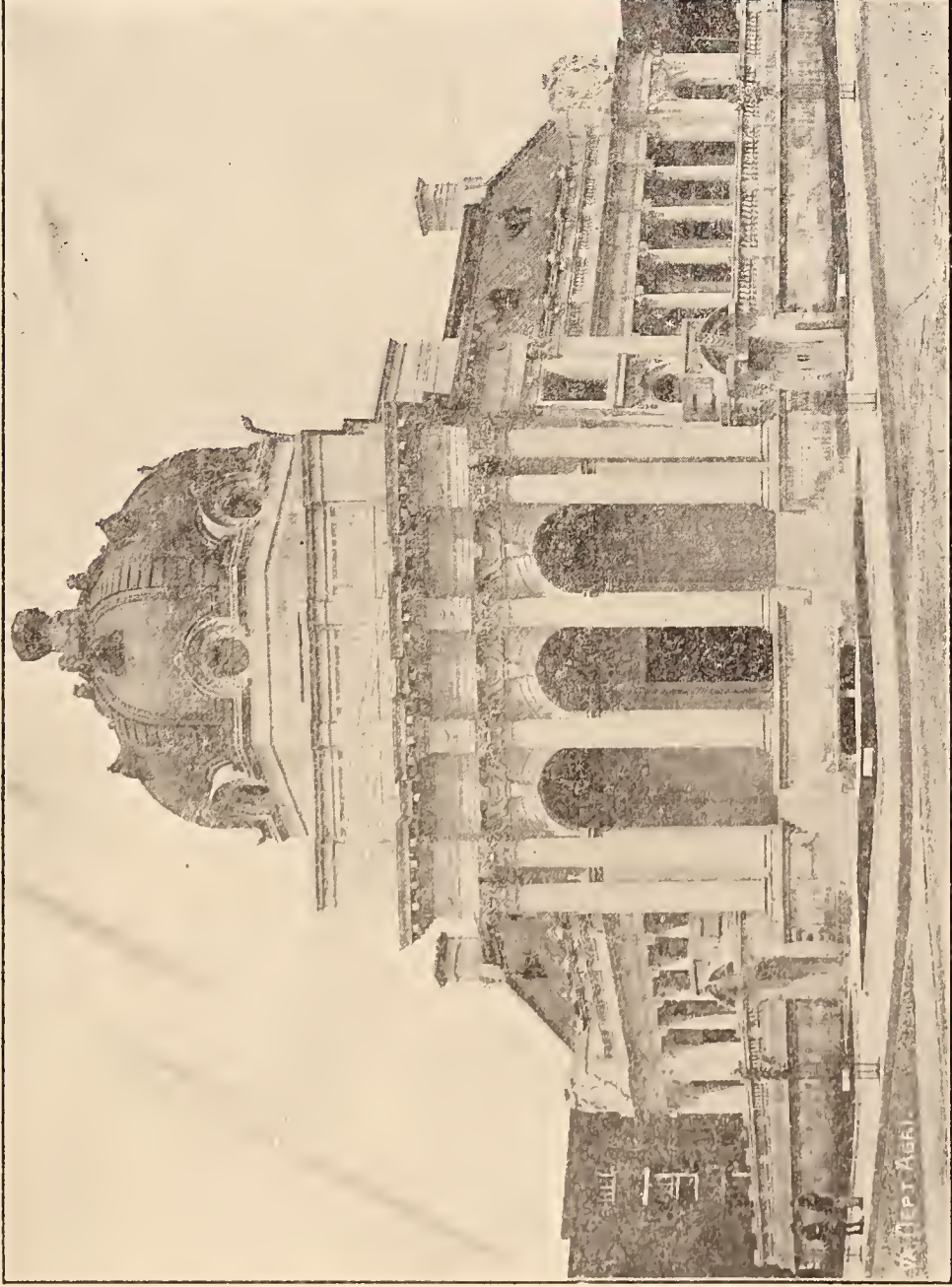
CHAPTER VI

THE COMMITTEE OF NINE

The story of the contest in 1868 and 1869 between the Conservatives and the Radicals over the adoption of the Underwood Constitution is one of continual changes in the political attitude of both parties. The Conservatives grew more liberal, and the conservative Republicans more conservative until they finally became allies of the Conservative party. The Radicals clung to the Underwood Constitution with all of its objectionable clauses, in spite of the willingness of the Conservatives to compromise. When defeated in the fall of 1869, they urged Congress to continue military rule in the State and to inaugurate a government by Radicals alone. As a result of these political alignments, the Conservative white party grew larger, and the Radical, smaller and blacker. Furthermore, the name "Republican," by which the Radical party continued to call itself, became more and more disliked in Virginia politics.

During the summer and fall of 1868, there seemed to be but two alternatives for the people of Virginia; the Underwood Constitution, which mean disfranchisement of the whites and negro rule, or the continuance of military rule, which is degrading to a people who are able and accustomed to govern themselves.

An election to decide whether the constitution was to be adopted, and to elect officers under the same, was ordered by the Convention to be held on June 2, 1868. But General Schofield issued an order on April 24 to the effect that, since Congress had not made an appropriation to defray the expenses of an election, he had no authority to carry out the



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ordinance of the Convention which provided for an election on June 2. And since he thought that the constitution with the disfranchising clauses would be most harmful to the State, he refused to draw on the treasury for that purpose, as he had a right to do.¹ He also advised Congress to have the disfranchising and test oath clauses voted on separately. Wells and other extreme Radicals appeared before the Reconstruction committee in Congress to plead for an appropriation for holding the election before enough whites would have political disabilities removed from them to defeat the Radical aims. But the constitution continued to rest peacefully in the pigeon-hole of the Commanding General's desk, and Virginia remained unreconstructed under military government until 1870.

In spite of General Schofield's order of April suspending the time of the election indefinitely, the two parties, which had begun to plan their campaigns soon after the adjournment of the Convention in April, held conventions during the first two weeks of May, 1868, and nominated candidates for the principal offices in the State in case there should be an election at some time during the year. The Radicals nominated for governor a Radical carpetbagger, H. H. Wells.² The Conservatives nominated R. E. Withers.³

Wells had been appointed temporary governor of Virginia by the Commanding General on April 4, 1868. It was believed by the Conservatives that Governor Peirpoint was not re-appointed because he was not radical enough to suit

¹John M. Schofield, *Forty-six Years in the Army*, p. 402.

²Henry Horatio Wells was born in Rochester, New York, in 1823. He later became a resident of Michigan and served two years in the Michigan Legislature. He proved himself a good soldier during the war and was brevetted brigadier-general. In 1865 he settled in Richmond and practiced law. He was appointed by President Grant District Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia. Later he moved to Washington and was appointed United States Attorney for District of Columbia.

³They nominated James A. Walker for lieutenant-governor and John L. Marye, Jr., for attorney-general. The Radicals nominated J. H. Clements for lieutenant-governor and G. W. Booker for attorney-general.

the Republicans of the State. The real cause of the change seems to have been the desire on the part of the Republican managers to bring forward a leader who was sufficiently extreme to get the support of the negroes and other Radicals, but superior in ability and respectability to Hawxhurst and Hunnicutt, who had announced their candidacy for the office of governor before the adjournment of the Constitutional Convention, and were actively canvassing the negro voters. Wells would also receive prestige from his new office which would make the way easy for his nomination on the Republican ticket in the next election of governor.⁴

During the remainder of the year after the Convention had adjourned, the campaign was conducted vigorously by both parties. The Radicals became more confident of victory and the Conservatives more determined to defeat the constitution and to elect a Conservative governor. At this time the people of the South believed that the intelligent people of the North would not advocate universal negro suffrage in the South.⁵ Even the announcement by the Republican party in the summer of 1868 of its platform with universal negro suffrage as its cardinal doctrine did not make them lose hope of somehow

⁴A. H. H. Stuart, *The Restoration of Virginia*, pp. 49-50.

⁵What the people of the State thought of the sentiment of the Northern states on this question is seen from an address of the Conservative members of the Constitutional Convention of 1867. The following is an extract from this address:

“Every Northern state which has voted on the subject since the close of the war has rejected negro suffrage. Ohio, on a direct issue, no later than last fall, did so by a majority exceeding 50,000. Kansas, Minnesota and Connecticut had previously done the same thing. The late Constitutional Convention of New York deliberately recoiled from deciding the question. And Michigan, hitherto so overwhelmingly Republican, has just voted down her new constitution by a majority of 30,000 because it admitted negroes to the polls. The census shows that there were only 35,000 negroes in Ohio in 1860. There could have been only 7,000 negro voters in the state, had they been enfranchised. In Michigan there are only about 500 male negroes twenty-one years of age. The white voters number more than 165,000. And yet this state, where a Republican governor was elected in 1866 by a majority of 29,038, refused by some 30,000 majority to let 500 negroes vote.” The *Richmond Whig*, April 20, 1868; the *Richmond Enquirer*, same date.

escaping negro suffrage. Public opinion had been somewhat inclined towards negro suffrage as a compromise measure, but it had changed during the year of negro domination in politics which the people had just experienced. This campaign increased the hostility to universal negro suffrage. When, therefore, the elections in the fall of 1868 showed the Virginians that Reconstruction could only come through the sacrifice of feeling and conviction in accepting universal negro suffrage with its dangers to their lives, property, and civilization, the outlook for the future seemed most gloomy. The apparent hopelessness of the situation, and the discouragement of the people, threatened to cause entire inactivity in politics among the Conservatives. It was felt that Congress was determined to degrade them and that there was no use to struggle against the inevitable. What was in store for them was no longer an uncertainty, since negro suffrage had been tested.

On December 8, 1868, the bill approving the Underwood Constitution was passed in the Federal House of Representatives with little notice or comment on the part of the members of the House and with no protest from the people of Virginia. Alexander H. H. Stuart of Staunton, Virginia, who had been a close observer of affairs in the State and in Congress, had urged one of the organized political committees in Richmond to formulate a protest to Congress against the approval of the Underwood Constitution. But it did not consider such action within its jurisdiction.

Fortunately for Virginia, Congress took its recess soon after the House of Representatives had approved the constitution. Time was thus gained to aid Mr. Stuart in the carrying out of a scheme which he had already set on foot to rid the constitution of its most objectionable features—the test oath, disfranchisement, and county organization clauses—while accepting as a matter of necessity universal negro suffrage. This scheme was first brought before the people in an article over the signature “Senex,” which appeared in the

Richmond *Whig* and in the Richmond *Dispatch* on Christmas Day, 1868. By Mr. Stuart's permission his authorship of the article was made known at the same time. He pointed out that there would be military rule should the constitution be rejected at the polls, and that a still greater calamity would befall the State should the constitution be accepted in its entirety. Negro suffrage was now inevitable since public sentiment at the North, as shown by the recent elections and by the tone of the press, had changed in this respect. He showed that it had become the conviction of a majority of the people of that section that negro suffrage was the legitimate, if not the necessary, consequence of emancipation; and that these people had the power to enforce their convictions. It would be better, he counseled, to accept negro suffrage in return for a revision of the Underwood Constitution. He advised the executive committee of the Conservative party to call two men of "approved wisdom and integrity" from each congressional district of the State to meet and draw up for the consideration of Congress a new constitution which would embody "the universal suffrage and universal amnesty proposition in its broadest terms, and negro eligibility [to office] to boot!"

So unprepared were the people of Virginia for accepting universal negro suffrage, especially after the campaign that had just been waged on that issue, that one of the leading Richmond papers refused to publish Mr. Stuart's article, and those that did publish it did so only on condition that they assume no responsibility for it whatever. Even Colonel John B. Baldwin, who was one of the active and useful advocates of the "New Movement," as the plan was called, hesitated in joining Mr. Stuart at first because he thought that public opinion was not prepared to entertain so bold a proposition. On January 2, 1869, he wrote to Mr. Stuart, who had just returned from Richmond where he had gone in behalf of this movement, a letter in which he said:

"I apprehend from all I can learn from Bell, Trout, and Echols, that you found rather a slim showing of sympathy

in Richmond, and I shall not be surprised if you find the movement entirely tabooed before many days.

“Our people seem to be in pretty much the same condition they were just before the fall of the Confederacy. Everybody looked for it and believed it was coming, and yet if anyone dared utter his thoughts he was set upon and cuffed without mercy.

“Our people now do not seem to be prepared to discuss, or even to consider any plan of dealing with the awful danger which threatens them, and I very much fear they will be caught as the people of old were by the deluge.”⁶

Mr. Stuart's article was widely and earnestly discussed. It had much influence upon public opinion and prepared the way for the events that later took place. The “New Movement” rapidly gained ground as the people began reluctantly to admit that what had been said in the “Senex” article was true.

Through the influence of Mr. Stuart a number of leading men from all parts of the State met in Richmond on December 31, 1869, to formulate more definite plans for making the movement a success. A committee of nine men was chosen to go to Washington in order to acquaint Congress with the true state of affairs in Virginia and to prevent the evils that impended. Mr. Stuart was made chairman. The other members were: John B. Baldwin, of Augusta County; John L. Marye, Jr., of Fredericksburg; James F. Johnson, of Bedford County; W. T. Sutherland, of Danville; Wyndham Robertson, of Washington County; W. L. Owen, of Halifax County; James Neeson, of Richmond, and J. F. Slaughter, of Lynchburg. The New Movement was exceedingly fortunate in having as its founder and guiding spirit Alexander H. H.

⁶A. H. H. Stuart, *The Restoration of Virginia*, p. 30. The movement was opposed in the beginning by some of the leading politicians of the State. Among these were Henry A. Wise (Richmond *Enquirer*, January 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 1869). Marmaduke Johnson (*Enquirer*, January 13), Raleigh T. Daniel (*Enquirer*, February 2, 1869), and the ex-Governor Letcher (*Enquirer*, February 17, 1869).

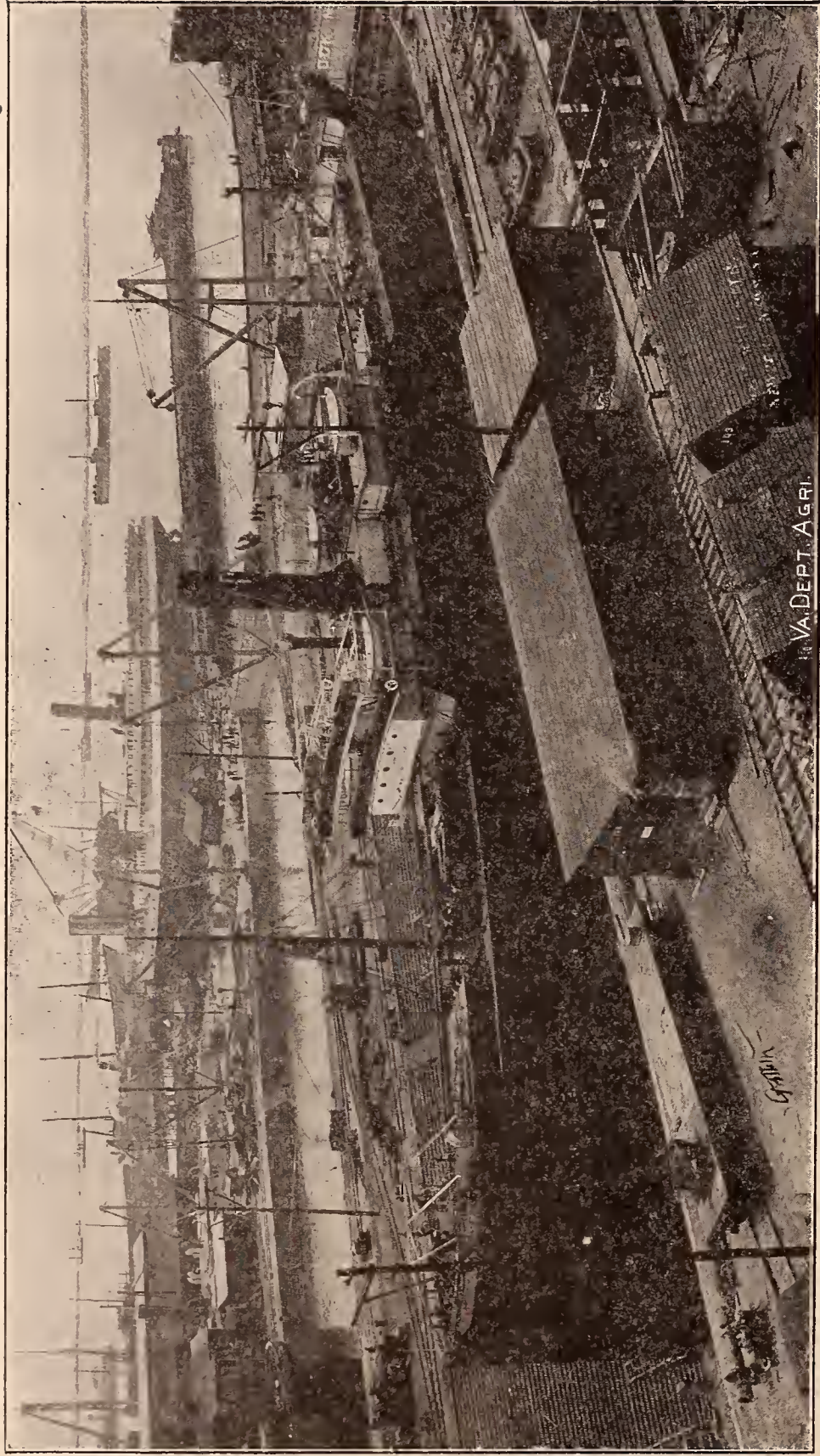
Stuart. He had served his State as a member of each branch of the General Assembly, as a representative in Congress, as presidential elector, and as Secretary of the Interior under President Fillmore. He had been a Whig and a strong Union man, but had been loyal to the State during the war.⁷ His mental and moral worth was well known and respected, and the success of his scheme was largely due to the high regard in which he was held.

At the time that the Committee of Nine was appointed, resolutions were adopted setting forth the aims of those present at the meeting, and requesting the people of Virginia to choose delegates to a popular convention to be held in Richmond on February 10, 1869, for the purpose of considering the report of the Committee of Nine and to adopt such measures as would be necessary to aid them. The views and purpose of the meeting as set forth in its resolutions were the same in substance as those expressed in the "Senex" letter. They were stated in the resolutions as follows: "While the convictions of the undersigned and, as they believe, of the people of Virginia, generally remain unchanged, that the freedmen of the Southern States in their present uneducated condition are not prepared for the intelligent exercise of the elective franchise and the performance of other duties connected with public affairs, and are therefore, at this time unsafe depositories of political power; yet, in view of the verdict of public opinion in favor of their being allowed to exercise the right of suffrage as expressed in the recent elections, the undersigned are prepared to surrender their opposition to its incorporation into their fundamental law as an offering on the altar of peace, and in the hope that union and harmony may be restored on the basis of universal suffrage and universal amnesty."⁸

On January 8, 1869, the Committee of Nine met in Wash-

⁷He was later rector of the University of Virginia for a number of years, a trustee of the Peabody Fund, and president of the Virginia Historical Society.

⁸A. H. H. Stuart, *Restoration of Virginia*, p. 28.



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ington. Colonel Baldwin was its chief spokesman before the reconstruction and judiciary committees of Congress. He had been active in Virginia politics and was moderate, pleasing in address, and very forceful in debate. Mr. Stuart secured the services of his friend, Horace Greeley, thereby enlisting the powerful influence of the New York *Tribune* in bringing the true state of affairs in Virginia before the people of the North. In this way he rendered much aid to the Committee of Nine.⁹

There were two other delegations present at the meetings of the committees in Congress having charge of Reconstruction. One of them represented the conservative faction of the Republican party, and the other, the radical faction. The former delegation, which was composed of Franklin Stearns, L. H. Chandler, Edgar Allen, and others, was there simply as a committee of observation to prevent any action prejudicial to its faction in Virginia. The latter delegation, which was more numerous, was led by Governor Wells and was composed of both white and colored men. It had come to defeat, if possible, the plans of the Committee of Nine.

Governor Wells testified before the Reconstruction Committee that enfranchisement of the whites would not be safe at that time; that it would put an end to the Republican party in Virginia and destroy the last hope of the Loyalists in the State; and that material development could only come through Republican or Radical control. He stated furthermore that public opinion in Virginia would not support the Committee of Nine. He was answered by members of the other two delegations. Mr. Stearns said that, since the defeat of the Democratic party in the elections of the previous fall, the people of Virginia were ready to comply with the Reconstruction Acts; that a majority of the property-holders would support the Committee of Nine; and that if Virginia were restored

⁹Among the most influential newspapers of the North that gave their support to the Committee of Nine were the New York *Times*, the Boston *Advertiser* and the Chicago *Tribune*. A. H. H. Stuart, *Restoration of Virginia*, p. 47.

under the proposed constitution without the disfranchising, test oath, and county organization clauses, prosperity would revive and "justice would be impartially administered and all classes completely protected." He condemned the Underwood Constitution and felt confident that it would be defeated by an honest vote of the people, which would "leave the State without a civil government and subject to all the whims and caprices of military rule." He was therefore in favor of the program of the Committee of Nine.¹⁰ After a conference with the Judiciary Committee in the Senate, the Committee of Nine was requested to present in writing its grievances and the amendments to the Underwood Constitution that it desired.¹¹ The report was written by Mr. Baldwin.

The conservative Republicans, finding themselves in accord with the Committee of Nine, had become its ally. One of those who was invited to Washington by the committee was Gilbert C. Walker, a New Yorker, who had come to reside in Norfolk, Virginia.¹² The aid that he rendered the committee in Washington won for him the esteem of the most influential conservatives of both parties and paved the way for his election a few months later as governor of the State.

Remembering his promise to the Committee of Nine, General Grant, in his first message to Congress of April 7, 1869, advised that an election be held in Virginia and suggested that such parts of the constitution as might be thought expedient be submitted separately to the voters.¹³ Three days later, Congress responded to the President's message by au-

¹⁰Stuart, *Restoration in Virginia*, pp. 37, 38.

¹¹*Ibid.*, pp. 39-44.

¹²Gilbert Carleton Walker was born in Binghamton, New York, August 1, 1832, and died in May, 1888. He was a graduate of Hamilton College and studied law. He later moved to Chicago, Illinois, where he became a very successful lawyer. In 1864 he came to Norfolk, Virginia, for his health. Here he became one of the leaders in business enterprises, was president of a bank and an active politician. He was a handsome man and a fluent speaker, and became justly popular in the State which had adopted him. He was elected to Congress from the Richmond district in 1874 and in 1876. In 1881 he moved to New York City.

¹³*Ibid.*, pp. 53, 54.

thorizing him to submit the Underwood Constitution to the voters of Virginia for their approval or rejection at such a time and in such a manner as he should see fit. The state officers provided for under the constitution were to be elected at the same time. Accordingly, on May 14, 1869, the President named July 6 of that year as the date for the election. Sections 1 and 7 of Article III, those relating to the test oath and disfranchisement, were to be voted on separately.¹⁴ It was a great disappointment to the Conservatives that the county organization clause was not included among those to be submitted to a separate vote. General Grant had expressed his unqualified disapproval of this feature of the constitution to the Committee of Nine, because it would put the governments in about half of the counties of the State under the control of the negroes and their unscrupulous white leaders. On this point, however, the President had yielded to the opposition of his cabinet which feared that a change in this respect would destroy the public school system which was closely associated in the constitution with the county organization.

The way was now clear for the decisive struggle between the Conservatives and the Radical-Republicans for which both sides had already been preparing.

¹⁴Code of Virginia, 1873, p. 26.

CHAPTER VII

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1869 AND THE RESTORATION OF VIRGINIA

While it appeared that the New Movement had divided the Conservatives into two factions during the early part of 1869, a serious division had occurred in the ranks of their opponents. This schism was due in a great part to the unfortunate personality and ultra-radicalism of the Radical candidate for governor, H. H. Wells. His political record was not above reproach, and he had made some very powerful enemies in his party. His sudden elevation to the highest office in the State and to the leadership of the Republican party, which went with that position, had brought upon him the jealousy and dislike of such men as Hunnicutt and Hawxhurst, who were openly aspiring to that preeminence themselves. Through his dishonesty, he had incurred the enmity of General Mahone, the leading railroad man of the State, a man of doubtful party leanings but of great influence as a politician. Wells had alienated the more moderate members of his party by his extreme views and by some rather questionable political acts.¹ He had been one of the first of the Republicans to advocate the universal enfranchisement of the negroes and the disfranchisement of the whites. As early as June, 1865, he had accused the white people of Virginia of perjury and had advocated very extreme measures against them. His views² are stated in a letter of June 21, 1865, to S. Ferguson Beach, president of the Virginia Union Association. This letter was widely used as a political document at the time. After stating

¹Richmond *Enquirer*, March 11, 1869.

²Richmond *Enquirer*, April 7, 1868.

that "loyal" men, both white and colored, were not receiving sufficient protection, and that a remedy was necessary, he said, "And what is that remedy? It is, in my judgment, to establish a military provisional government, to locate a sufficient military force to preserve peace, command respect, and secure order; in other words, to *vindicate the supremacy of the law*. Then disfranchise those who are not loyal; make loyal acts, and not a *paper oath*, the test of loyalty. This done, create a perpetual balance of power, which will at all times secure you from a political danger; or more plainly, *let the negro vote*."

In 1868 Wells urged the Reconstruction Committee in Congress to disfranchise 25,000 Virginians who had not been disfranchised by the Reconstruction Acts, in order to make secure the political position of his party. In 1868, he advocated the Underwood Constitution without reservation. And in 1869, he again appeared before the Reconstruction Committee and opposed the submission of the objectionable clauses of the constitution to a separate vote because it would mean the defeat of the Republican party in the State. In spite of all this, in May, 1869, Wells declared himself in favor of the omission of the offensive clauses in the Underwood Constitution.³ This move was taken by him after it was evident that his former position was making him unpopular with the best men in the Republican party. But he did not advocate in his public speeches the defeat of the clauses, and his followers, both white and colored, continued to support the constitution as a whole. It was generally believed, and with good reason, that he was still working secretly with his followers for the objectionable clauses.⁴

The unpopularity of Governor Wells had made such discord in the Republican ranks that the state executive committee of the party decided to set aside all the nominations of 1868 and to call a new convention to put other candidates in the field. The convention met at Petersburg March 9 and

³Richmond *Enquirer*, May 8, 1869.

⁴Richmond *Enquirer*, June 10, 1869.

10, 1869. It was one of the most turbulent of the many disorderly Radical conventions of the period.

The insurgents, who composed the more moderate wing of the Republican party, desired the nomination of James H. Clements for governor. The negroes, who made up the rank and file of the opposing wing, supported the candidacy of Wells almost unanimously. The contest between the two factions over the election of a chairman of the convention was very stormy. When the Clements faction claimed the victory, the Wells followers started a riot. Order was restored only after the police had made an unsuccessful effort to restore peace, and the mayor of Petersburg had threatened to call in Federal troops. As a result of this disorder, the Conservative faction was overpowered. The Radicals, now in possession of the field, elected from among their number the permanent officers and appointed a new state central committee. Six negroes were members of this newly appointed committee of the party. Wells received the nomination for governor. The leading white Radicals had expected to nominate for lieutenant-governor, Dr. W. C. Douglas, of Richmond County, but a colored delegate, Lewis Lindsay,⁵ nominated Dr. J. D. Harris, a negro, of Hampton, Virginia. Edgar Allen, in order to further discredit the Wells ticket in the eyes of the people of the State, helped to win the nomination for Harris by an eloquent speech, which completely won over the negro delegates.⁶ Resolutions were adopted by the convention advocating the early restoration of Virginia under the new constitution without any changes or amendments; an early election, in order to insure a Radical victory; the right of the "real" Republican party to dictate the manner of restoring the State to the Union as well as the constitution and laws under which the State should be restored; and the disfranchisement of,

⁵For an account of the convention, see *Enquirer*, March 10, 11, 1869, and other papers of those dates.

⁶The *Richmond Whig*, March 11, 1869.

and the refusal of amnesty to, the great body of the white people of Virginia.

After the adjournment of the convention, the more moderate Republicans met and drew up resolutions to the effect that it was their opinion that the large majority of the intelligent people of Virginia were willing to carry out in good faith the measures proposed by Congress for the reconstruction of the Southern States. "We believe," continued the resolutions, "that they will cheerfully support true and well-known Republicans for State officers; and to afford them an opportunity to do this we respectfully recommend: for Governor, G. C. Walker, of Norfolk city; for Lieutenant-Governor, John F. Lewis, of Rockingham County; and for Attorney-General, J. C. Taylor, of Montgomery County.'" These resolutions were signed by over one hundred and fifty of the most intelligent and respectable members of the Republican party in the State and show clearly the influence of the Committee of Nine. In fact, those who had been mainly instrumental in drawing up the resolutions were members of the conservative Republican committee that had assisted Mr. Stuart's Committee of Nine in Washington during the month of January.

The Committee of Nine had suggested that a conservative ticket be put in the field against Wells, regardless of party lines. It had even suggested that in case the conservative faction of the Republican party was unable to defeat the nomination of Wells in the coming election, that they withdraw from the convention and nominate candidates of their own, and thus defeat the Wells ticket by dividing the party. But no definite arrangement had been made with the moderate Republicans.⁸ It is probable that the allied factions saw at an early date the necessity of supporting a conservative, or moderate, Republican ticket in order to defeat the Wells faction, but wisely kept their plan to themselves until public opinion

⁷Appleton's *Annual Cyclopædia*, 1869.

⁸Stuart, *The Restoration of Virginia*, pp. 51, 52.

was ready for its adoption. At any rate it was adopted in April, 1869, by the Conservatives and the moderate Republicans.

On the twenty-eighth of that month a convention of the Conservative party met in Richmond at the Exchange Hotel, the political rendezvous of that day.⁹ The attitude of the people in regard to the New Movement had changed. After the first heat of bitter protest had passed away, they had recovered their good judgment and self control and were determined to save, if possible, the remainder of their political fortunes. Resolutions were adopted urging the voters to defeat the objectionable clauses of the constitution. The candidates who had been nominated by the Conservatives about twelve months before withdrew in order to give the party a free hand in this crisis. A few days later the state central committee urged the people to support the conservative Republican candidates. The Conservative party could probably have won by an honest count; but since the choice would have lain between Withers, a "red-handed Confederate Colonel," and Wells, a "loyal" Republican, the latter might have been "counted in" by the election officials.¹⁰

Such was the party alignment when, on May 4, 1869, President Grant named July 6, 1869, as the time of the election in Virginia and proclaimed that a separate vote should be taken on the disfranchising and test oath clauses. Notwithstanding the disappointment of the Conservatives because the county organization clause was not submitted to a separate vote, the campaign, which had already been inaugurated, was conducted with energy. Walker was greeted with enthusiasm by Conservatives in all parts of the State. Wells also conducted an efficient campaign, mostly among the negroes.

The Conservatives were beginning to feel confident of victory, when it became known, just before the election, that General Canby, who had succeeded General Stoneman as

⁹Richmond *Enquirer*, April 29, 1869.

¹⁰Stuart, *Restoration of Virginia*, p. 52.

commanding general of the District in March, 1869, was determined to administer the "iron clad" oath to the officers-elect. Should this be done, the candidate having the next highest vote would be counted in. Only Radicals would then be elected, and it would have meant disaster to the Conservatives and to the State. Upon hearing of this through Mr. Stuart, the President issued an order preventing General Canby from carrying his designs into effect.¹¹

The attitude of the conservative whites towards the negroes in this campaign is very interesting. The Conservative party had organized as a white man's party after the bitter campaign of 1867, but the new organization, which included the moderate Republicans, sought the aid of the conservative negroes just as the Conservative party had done in the election of 1867. Most of the political shortcomings of the negroes were charged to their white Radical advisers, who were cordially hated during their stay in Virginia. The negroes themselves, if moderate, were preferred as candidates to these men. The *Richmond Dispatch*, a Conservative paper, in commenting on the election, said, "Dr. Norton [colored] of Williamsburg, will be no doubt elected in the First District. He is, we believe, conservative, and opposes Ayer, the bitter Radical from the North. We shall consider Norton's election a victory."¹² In several counties the white Conservatives nominated negroes for office. Three of these were elected to the General Assembly.¹³ Some of the most substantial negroes aided the Conservatives in this campaign as they had done in 1867.

About a week before the election, some two hundred and fifty Conservative negroes of Richmond, at the risk of personal violence from the colored Radicals, arranged a barbecue for their men and invited a number of prominent white Conservatives. The speeches on both sides were harmonious and good feeling prevailed. The hosts displayed a banner upon

¹¹Stuart, *The Restoration of Virginia*, pp. 63-66.

¹²(Ayer was elected, however.) *Dispatch*, July 7, 1869.

¹³The *Nation*, July 15, 1869.

which was a picture of a white man and a colored man shaking hands. Under the picture was written, "United we stand; divided we fall." By an unhappy coincidence a nearby bridge fell soon after the appearance of this banner, carrying with it a crowd of people. Many were injured and several killed.¹⁴ Among those who were killed was Colonel James R. Branch, a prominent white Conservative, of Richmond.

The Radicals encouraged the superstitious negroes in believing that this accident was an evil omen against the affiliating of members of their race with the Conservative party. The Radical newspapers attributed much importance to the providential warning, as they interpreted it, to the negroes. One of them, the Richmond *Evening Journal*, of July 3, 1869, said of the accident, "That colored vote of ours is a *power*. It is directed by a religious sentiment. The hand of God is in it to curse those who apostasize, and to bless and guide those who go faithfully to the polls and vote for the Republican ticket. * * * There has been no 'colored Conservative barbecue' and there will be none. An awful fiat has forbidden, and that finger will not again be tempted to be uplifted against colored apostasy."¹⁵

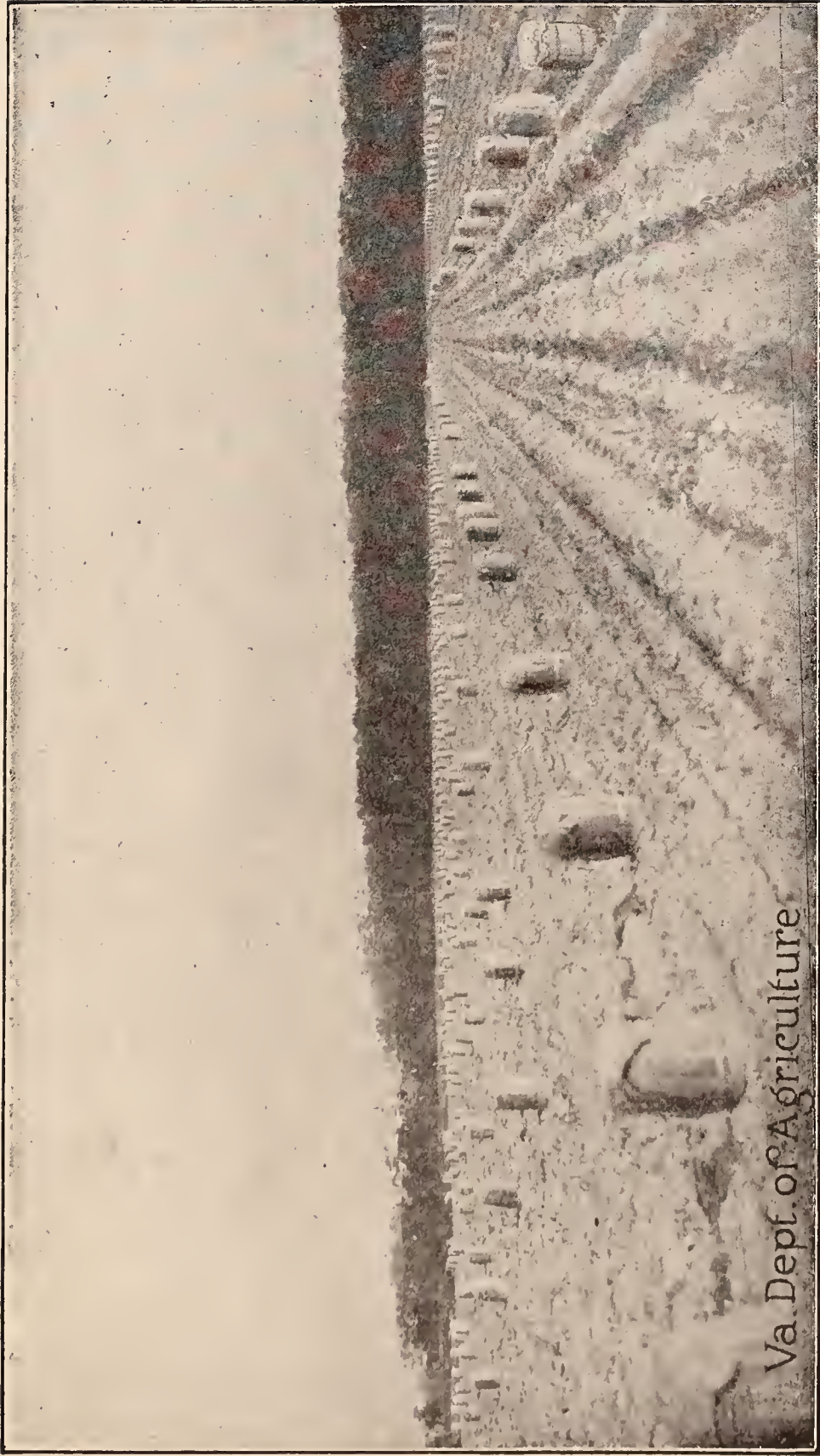
During this campaign most of the negroes were completely under the influence of the Union League.¹⁶ Some of them were persuaded by the anti-Wells Republicans to follow them into the Conservative ranks. Others had been persuaded to abandon the League by the farmers, who in some cases refused to employ a member.

As the day of the election drew near the negroes showed a growing tendency to nominate men of their own color as candidates for election to the General Assembly and to Congress. On May 24, the first unmixed negro state convention ever held

¹⁴Richmond *Dispatch*, July 2, 3, 1869.

¹⁵Quoted in the Richmond *Dispatch* of July 5, 1869. According to the *Dispatch* (July 9) the accident was made to help in intimidating those of the negroes who had deserted the Union League. Barbecues were given the negroes in several counties to win them from the League.

¹⁶The Richmond *Dispatch*, July 2, 1869.



EASTERN SHORE POTATO SCENE

in Virginia met in Petersburg in answer to a call issued by the colored people of that city. The object of the convention, as expressed by Dr. Bayne, was to bring it about that the State would have no peace while all of its offices were filled with white men. The convention endorsed the whole Underwood Constitution and the Wells ticket.¹⁷

In a number of counties in the State the negroes put candidates of their own race in the field against those of both the Walker and the Wells tickets. In Norfolk city they had two colored candidates for the State Senate and three for the House of Delegates. In six Congressional districts they had candidates for the House of Representatives.

The vote in the election of 1869 was perhaps the largest that had ever been cast in the history of the State. The returns are very interesting since they show the vote by race as well as by party. They were as follows:¹⁸

Total Number of Registered Voters:

White	149,781
Colored	120,103

Number of Votes Cast:

White	125,114
Colored	97,205

The Constitution:

For	210,585
Against	9,136

4th Clause, Sec. 1, Art. III, of Constitution:

For	84,410
Against	124,360

7th Section, Article III:

For	83,458
Against	124,715

Not Voting:

White	24,637
Colored	22,898

¹⁷The Richmond *Enquirer*, May 28, 29, 1869.

¹⁸*Code of Virginia*, 1873, p. 28.

For Governor:

Walker	119,535
Wells	101,204

For Lieutenant-Governor:

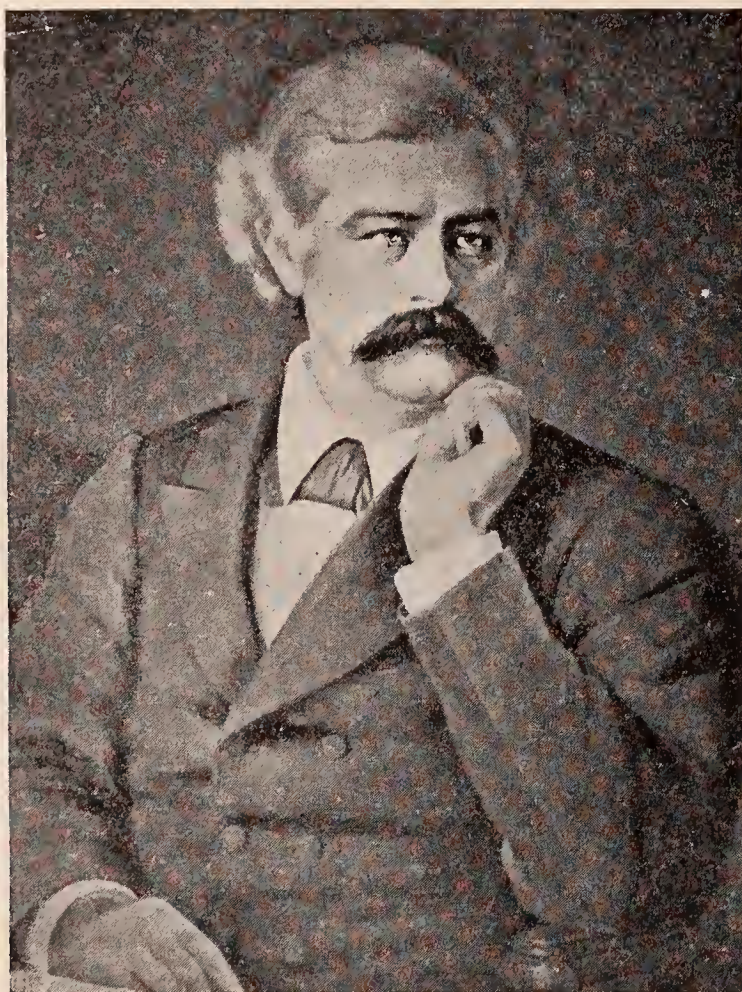
Lewis	120,068
Harris	99,600

For Attorney-General:

Taylor	119,446
Bowden	101,129

The color line in this election was drawn more sharply than in the previous election. That part of the constitution, not including the two parts that were voted on separately, was accepted by both sides almost unanimously. Walker was elected governor by a majority of 18,331 out of 220,739 votes. The Conservatives, Lewis and Taylor, were also elected lieutenant-governor and attorney-general, respectively. Of the six candidates for the three highest state offices, Taylor received the greatest number of votes and Harris, his colored opponent, the smallest. Evidently some of the Radicals did not support their colored candidate. The most interesting and significant feature of the election was the vote on the clauses that were submitted separately. The negroes voted almost unanimously for these clauses, which, if adopted, would have disfranchised thousands of white men and disqualified from holding office practically all the white men of the State. The efforts to break the hold of the Union League on the negroes had been successful only to a very small degree, and the negroes voted as they had been instructed by their Radical leaders.

Of the 43 senators elected to the General Assembly, 30 were Conservative and 13, Radical. Of the 138 delegates elected, 96 were Conservative and 42, Radical. There were 6 negro Radicals among the senators elected, and 18 negro Radicals and 3 negro Conservatives among the delegates. The



GILBERT C. WALKER
Governor, 1870-1874

Conservative candidates won 5 out of the 9 Congressional districts.

To the country at large this seemed like a victory of the moderate faction of the Republican party, but it was really a victory of the old Conservative party. It meant that the State had passed directly from under a fairly efficient military government to one under Conservative control, and that Virginia was thereby spared several painful years of carpet-bag-negro rule, such as existed in most of the other Southern states. There remained, however, from Reconstruction a new and cumbersome government, the provision for an expensive public school system, a large public debt, and other new and fearful problems—social, political, and racial. These problems had to be faced and solved by a poverty-stricken state, carrying a heavy debt and a burden of about one hundred and fifty thousand newly enfranchised freedmen, who were densely ignorant and well organized under unscrupulous leaders, politically hostile to the white people.

The election had been a quiet one in spite of the bitterness of the campaign that had preceded it.¹⁹ The general apprehension that had been felt over this feature of the election is shown in the frequent comment, "No disturbance," "All quiet," or other similar laconic phrases in the telegraphic reports to the newspapers of the elections in the black counties of the State. In a few of the reports, mention was made of the fact that some negroes had voted with the whites for Walker.²⁰

There was great rejoicing among the Conservatives over the results of the election. The Norfolk correspondent of a Richmond paper said, "While I write, bonfires are burning, music playing, and other demonstrations of a rejoicing people" are in progress. There were similar celebrations throughout the State. The exodus of the carpetbaggers was anticipated with keen pleasure. "Thank God," writes the editor of

¹⁹The *Dispatch*, July 8, 1869, considered this "a marvel of these days."

²⁰Richmond *Dispatch*, July 7, 1869.

the *Richmond Dispatch*, "they must soon depart or take to some honest livelihood."

In September, 1869, after the Radical defeat, the provisional Governor, Wells, resigned, and the governor-elect, Walker, was appointed by General Canby to the office. A few days later, October 5, 1869, the first General Assembly that had met in three years, and the first in ten years to receive the unqualified recognition of the Federal government, convened in Richmond. The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments were submitted to the Assembly by Governor Walker on the third day of its session. The former amendment was ratified in the Senate by a vote of 36 to 4, and in the House of Delegates by a vote of 126 to 6. The latter amendment was ratified in the Senate by a vote of 40 to 2, and in the House by a unanimous vote. The virtual unanimity with which the amendments were ratified is interesting in view of the fact that before the Assembly had been able to effect a permanent organization and proceed with its work, the Radical members had attempted to have the test oath required of all the members, and followed this vain attempt by a protest against the loyalty and legality of the Assembly.

The Radical party expressed its disapproval of the July elections in resolutions adopted by its state convention which met in Richmond on November 24, 1869. It was therein declared that "the election held in this State on the 6th of July, last, resulted in a Confederate triumph, which we unhesitatingly assert was achieved by artifice, intimidation and fraud."²¹

"We believe," continued the resolutions, "that the secret of our defeat can be found in the unfortunate submission to a separate vote of the test-oath and disfranchising clauses

²¹The election was conducted under the supervision of Federal officials, and two local men of each race were chosen to challenge the voters at the respective voting places. The commanding general at the time was a radical sympathizer. This accusation of the radicals, like many similar statements to gain the support of the North, was without foundation.

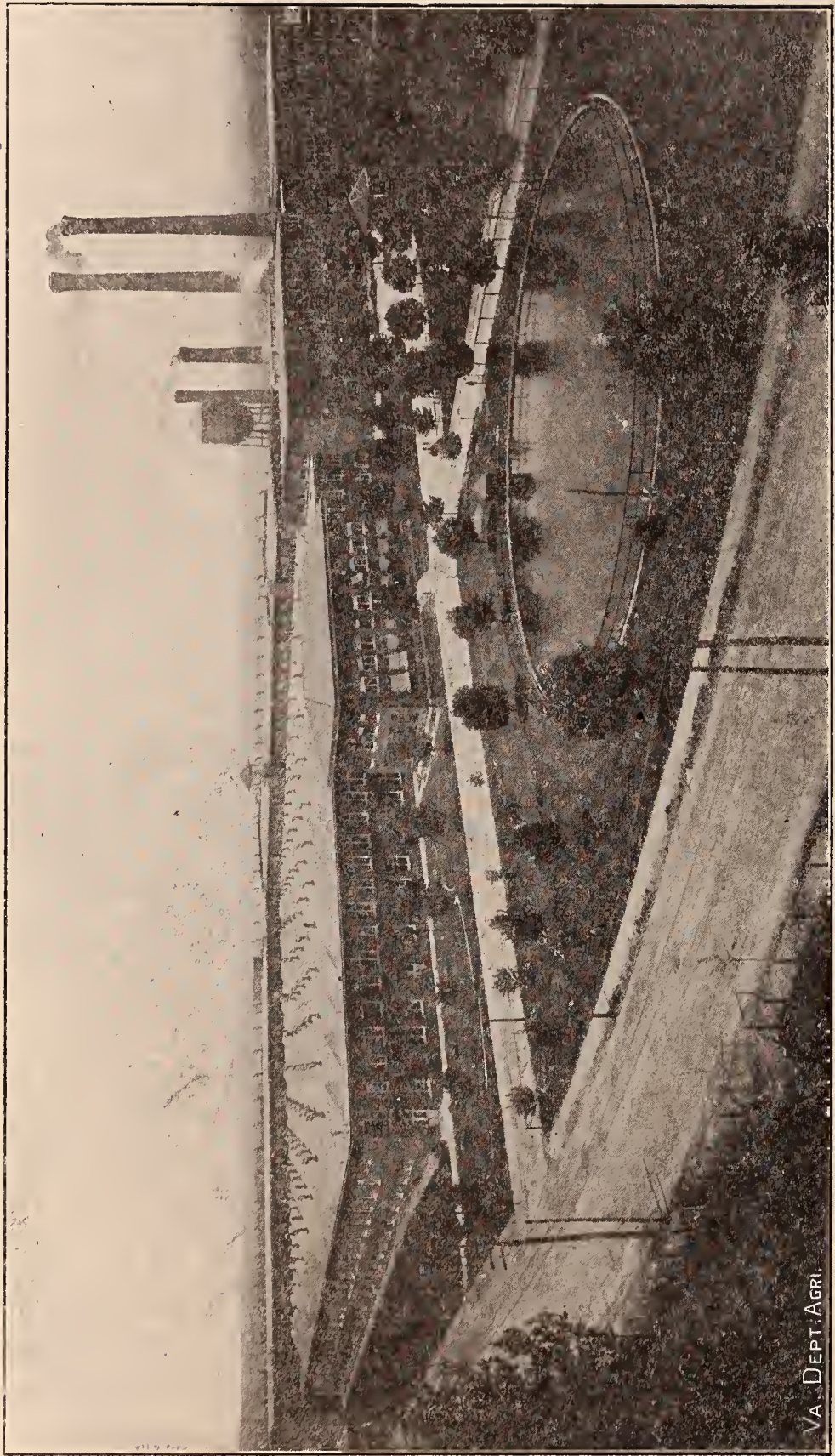
of the state constitution, in direct opposition to the deliberate opinion of the rank and file of the Republican party in Virginia.” An appeal was made to Congress to “guarantee to Virginia a republican form of government” by either requiring the test-oath of those elected, and upon their refusal to take it, to count in the candidate having the next highest vote, or by requiring a new election in order to have a vote taken on the constitution as a whole. “In event of a new election,” continued the appeal, “we would ask for a military force sufficient to protect us in our political and civil rights. * * *

This is perhaps our last contest. On your decision, loyalty in Virginia lives or dies. If you decide against us, no one will dare avow his Republicanism. The pernicious example set here will extend to other Southern States; the colored people will again be at the mercy of their former masters; the national debt will be repudiated; and the rebel Democratic yoke may be placed on the necks of the American people in 1872.”²²

These resolutions are sufficient to show the character and the methods of the “rank and file of the Republican party in Virginia,” and to explain, in part at least, the solidarity of the opposition to that party in the Commonwealth since 1867.

Fortunately for the State, Congress did not heed the cry of the Radicals, and Virginia took her place in the Union by an act of Congress of January 26, 1870.

²²Appleton's *Annual Cyclopædia*, 1869, p. 714.



RIVERSIDE COTTON MILLS, DANVILLE

VA. DEPT. AGRI.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ELIMINATION OF THE CARPETBAGGERS 1869 TO 1879

The victory over the Radicals had been fairly won under the careful supervision of the Federal authorities. The Radical domination of the state government by means of the colored vote was ended. But they retained their hold on the local administration in the black counties and were a constant menace to the political welfare of the State. Grave economic troubles had arisen out of war and Reconstruction. But before the people of the State could turn their attention to these matters, the political field had to be cleared of carpetbaggers and their radical followers, and the negroes relegated to the background in the affairs of government.

The economic troubles were intimately bound up in state politics with the state debt of over forty-five million dollars that had been contracted before the War of Secession for works of internal improvement.¹ The greater part of this debt had been made during the hopeful decade just preceding the war. During the decade of war and Reconstruction which followed, it was enormously increased by the unpaid interest that accumulated. Had there been no war, the debt, representing for the most part good investments, would not have been a burden to the people. In 1870, however, it weighed like a millstone upon the State, and was to dominate Virginia politics for the next two decades. In 1866, the payment in full of the debt and accumulated interest was pledged by the last legislature representing the old regime. By the code of honor of

¹R. L. Morton, "The Virginia State Debt and Internal Improvements, 1820-38," *The Journal of Political Economy*, April, 1917. W. H. Ambler, *The History of Sectionalism in Virginia*. See chapter IX for fuller discussion.

this regime, those who governed the State guarded its honor as jealously as they guarded their own honor in their personal dealings. Fraud had been practically unknown in the public affairs of the Commonwealth. The stand taken by the legislature in 1866 was heroic in view of the extreme poverty of the State at that time.

At the beginning of his administration, Governor Walker took too hopeful a view of the situation. In his message of March 8, 1870, he advocated the funding of the entire debt on a basis most favorable to the creditors, and the passage of other laws to strengthen public and private credit. His advice was heartily seconded by the press of the State and was approved by conservatives everywhere.

The legislature showed by its acts a desire to conform to the new order of things and to follow the lead of the Governor in an effort to strengthen the financial condition of the Commonwealth. A good system of public schools was inaugurated under the very efficient management of the first superintendent of public instruction, Dr. W. H. Ruffner; and provision was made for putting into operation the new system of local government required by the Underwood Constitution. But by taking advantage of the provision in the constitution that reapportionment should be made on the basis of representation in the General Assembly, the legislature broke up the gerrymander of the Underwood Constitution.²

Closely associated with the debt question was the question of railroad ownership and control. Governor Walker advocated the abandonment of the State's interest in the railroads. As a result of its policy of borrowing, the State owned a controlling interest in its main lines of communication. In response to the advice of the Governor, the legislature, after a bitter struggle, passed an act³ providing for the sale of the State's railroad stock at a sacrifice. The negro vote was the

²J. A. C. Chandler, *Representation in Virginia* (Johns Hopkins University Studies, vol. xiv), pp. 79-80.

³Act of March 28, 1871.

deciding factor in the passage of this bill.⁴ The act was not favorable to the interests of the State, and the people felt that their common property had been bartered away. This was one of the most important pieces of legislation of that session.

The most important act of the session, however, was the Funding Act, which was passed two days later. By this act it was provided that the old bonds could be exchanged for new ones, bearing six per cent interest—the old rate—for two-thirds of the amount of the old bonds respectively, and the overdue interest on them. With these were to be given interest-bearing certificates for the other third, upon which was to be the indorsement that payment of this would be made in accordance with such settlement as would thereafter be made between Virginia and West Virginia. Interest promises were to be in the form of coupons receivable in payment of taxes or other dues to the State.⁵

The bill was rushed through the House at the close of the session with little opportunity for debate. It received the support of half the Conservatives and of all the Republican members but one.⁶ The negroes, who were Republicans, voted against the bill at first but reversed their vote three hours later.⁷ It was believed that they had been bribed.

After the passage of this act the revenues of the State were not sufficient to pay the six per cent interest on the debt and at the same time pay the other appropriations provided by her laws.⁸ The current expenses of the State, which had averaged a little over half a million dollars, now required an

⁴C. C. Pearson, *The Readjuster Movement in Virginia*, p. 29.

⁵Act of March 30, 1871.

⁶*Journal of the House of Delegates*, March, 1871. *Journal of the Senate*, March, 1871.

⁷*House Journal*, 1871-1872, pp. 31, 137, 297 ff; the *Richmond Whig, Enquirer, Dispatch*, February 14-20, 1872—cited in C. C. Pearson, *The Readjuster Movement in Virginia*, p. 32. See also F. G. Ruffin, *The Cost and Outcome of Negro Education in Virginia* (pamphlet), Richmond, 1889; *Virginia House Journal and Documents*, 1874-1875, p. 30.

⁸*Journal and Documents of the House of Delegates*, 1874-1875; W. L. Royall, *The Virginia State Debt Controversy*, p. 21.

annual appropriation of over a million dollars. To offset this, only little was realized from the sale of the State's railroad assets under the act of March 28, 1871.⁹ Furthermore, taxes were already high and the people were in very straightened circumstances. The negroes, who constituted over a third of the population, had practically no property at all to be taxed.

There had been little interest taken in the campaign of 1870. Three Republican and five Conservative representatives were elected to Congress. The color line had appeared as usual between the two parties. At the end of the legislative session of 1870-1871, party issues were still ill defined. The debt and railroad controversies of that session had not been strictly along party lines. Party platforms had been conciliatory and not clear cut. There were factions in both parties because of recent legislation, and on account of strife between the carpet-baggers, supported by the negroes, and their allies, the scalawags, over the distribution of Federal patronage.¹⁰ But the Conservatives reorganized the party in their convention of August 30, 1871. The old ante-bellum leaders, who had been barred from politics, now made their presence felt. It should be noted, however, that six negro members from Richmond were given a hearty welcome at this convention and Governor Walker was invited to be present. About a month later the Republican convention formulated a platform in which the Conservative party was severely arraigned. The Funding Act, which had received the votes of their own delegates when passed, received special condemnation. It was also stated in the platform that the Conservatives had not fulfilled the requirements of the new constitution in regard to the public schools, and also in regard to the right of negroes to sit on juries.

In the November election which followed, the Conservatives increased their majority in the House of Delegates by fifteen

⁹*Senate Journal and Documents*, 1874-1875, Doc. 1.

¹⁰C. C. Pearson, *The Readjuster Movement in Virginia*, p. 38.

members, and in the Senate by six.¹¹ The number of negroes in the House was reduced from twenty-one to fourteen, and in the Senate from six to three.

In the meanwhile, the financial situation of the State was becoming very serious. The state government found it impossible to meet the obligations imposed by the Funding Act of March, 1871, and defaulted in the payment of the interest on the new bonds. In March, 1872, an act was passed over the Governor's veto forbidding tax collectors from receiving the coupons, already issued, in payment of taxes.¹² But the Virginia Court of Appeals, in December, 1872, declared this act an impairment of the obligation of contract and therefore unconstitutional.¹³ As a result, coupons were redeemed as before. A deficit occurred in the State's revenue. On account of this the public schools suffered most heavily.¹⁴ The new development in the debt question was looked upon with alarm by the Conservative leaders, especially those of the old school, who believed with William L. Royall that "all of this proceeded directly from the new order of things which the introduction of the negro as a voter produced."¹⁵

The legislature of 1872-1873 did not improve the situation by acts to reduce the expenses of the government or to aid the credit of the Commonwealth though elected with that end in view. The Conservative party failed to carry the State for Horace Greeley, the Liberal-Republican candidate, in the national election of 1872. In the Congressional elections of that year, Radical (Republican) candidates were elected from the four eastern and southern districts—the black districts—of

¹¹In the House of Delegates there were 97 Conservatives and 35 Republicans, 14 of the latter, colored; in the Senate there were 33 Conservatives and 10 Republicans, 3 of whom were colored. The *Richmond Dispatch*, November 16, 18, 1871; *Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia*, 1871.

¹²Act of March 7, 1872.

¹³*Antoni v. Wright*, 22, Grattan, 833.

¹⁴For account of arrears in the appropriations for the public schools, see the governor's message, December 6, 1876, *House Journal and Documents*, 1876-1877.

¹⁵W. L. Royall, *The Virginia State Debt Controversy*, p. 23. Mr. Royall was chief counsel for the bondholders during the controversy.

the State. The remaining five were won by the Conservatives.¹⁶

The Republican success in this election greatly encouraged them and aroused the Conservatives to increased efforts in the campaign for the election of the higher State officers and members of the General Assembly.

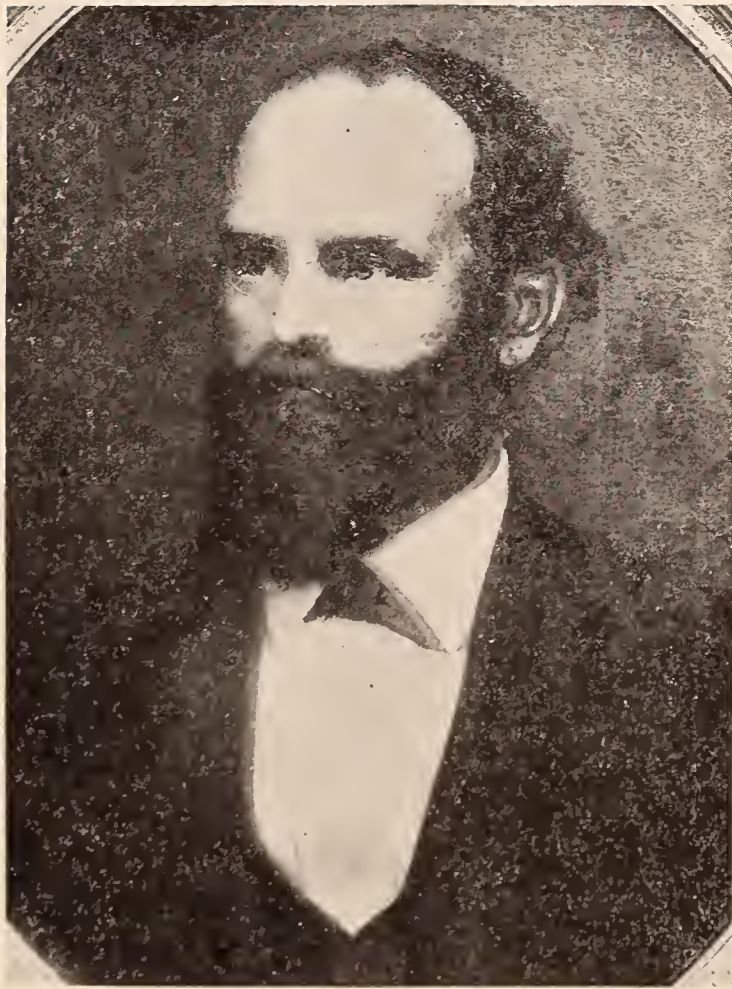
The campaign of 1873 was one of unusual interest throughout the Commonwealth. The Radical or Republican convention, assembled in Lynchburg on July 30. About half of its members were colored.¹⁷ Robert W. Hughes, a former secessionist and a man of ability, who came from southwestern Virginia, was nominated for governor; C. P. Ramsdell, a carpetbagger from an eastern county, for lieutenant-governor; and David Fultz, an old Union man, from Augusta County, for attorney-general. Thus every faction of the party and every section of the State were represented. The platform adopted was generous, progressive, and of wide appeal.

The Conservative convention, held in Richmond a few days later, August 6, was one of the largest and most enthusiastic meetings ever held by the party. Their nominations and platform, like those of the Republicans, were made with a view to harmonize contending factions and sections. General James L. Kemper, from the Valley, an officer in the Mexican war and in the War of Secession, was nominated for governor,¹⁸

¹⁶The first amendment to the Underwood Constitution was adopted by the people at this election. The usury clause was stricken out, giving the legislature a free hand in setting the rate of interest. The constitution underwent many changes in this way. For these changes, see later codes of Virginia, and, for a convenient summary of them, see David L. Pulliam, *The Constitutional Conventions of Virginia* (Richmond, 1901), pp. 165-179. A change in legislative representation had been made but this had been required by the constitution.

¹⁷Current newspapers. *Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia*, 1873.

¹⁸James Lawson Kemper was born in Madison County, Virginia, June 11, 1823, and died at Gordonsville, April 7, 1895. He graduated from Washington College and became a lawyer. During the Mexican War he was commissioned captain by President Polk. For ten years he was a member of the legislature, serving as speaker two years. During the War of Secession he fell desperately wounded while leading a brigade at Gettysburg in Pickett's famous charge. When he had recovered sufficiently, he was placed in command of the forces in and about the



JAMES LAWSON KEMPER
Governor, 1874-1878

Colonel R. E. Withers of the Southwest, for lieutenant-governor; and Raleigh T. Daniel, a prominent lawyer and party leader, of Richmond, for attorney-general. Kemper owed his nomination largely to the influence of William Mahone, whom he had supported in the contest over the railroads. Withers, on the other hand, was an enemy of Mahone.¹⁹

The return of the old leaders to political life was made possible by the wholesale removal of disabilities by Congress in 1872. The same qualities that had brought these men to the front in times of war brought them to the front in political affairs, and their rank in the army made them heroes in the popular mind. The platform adopted by the convention had much in common with the platform adopted by the Radicals the previous week, but it was not quite as liberal in content and tone. A comparison was drawn between the condition of Virginia under Conservative control and that of other Southern states under Radical rule; justice to all, regardless of race or nativity, was made the aim of the party; the new system of public schools was pointed to with pride, and liberal support of public school education was advocated.²⁰ Conservatives were advised to vote against all independent candidates.

In spite of the fortunate nominations and the progressive platforms of the two parties, the true issue of the campaign, negro control in politics, could not be concealed. The campaign was a struggle of the carpetbaggers to regain their former prominence through the aid of the negroes. The bitterness of their fight was increased by the realization that this would be, perhaps, their last one if they were defeated at that time. So sharply drawn was the line between the whites and the

Confederate Capital and was promoted to the rank of major general. When governor he was elected to the United States Senate but declined, saying that he then held the highest position the State could give.

¹⁹R. E. Withers, *Autobiography*.

²⁰It may be noted in this connection that there were in Virginia 390,913 negroes over ten years of age who could not read, and 445,893 who could not write. *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of Virginia, 1871*, p. 202. (According to the census of 1870 the total colored population was 512,841.)

blacks that, as *The Nation* expressed it, it was “barely an exaggeration to say that it was a struggle of races.”²¹ The Conservatives, who had refrained from recognizing the color line in former campaigns, now frankly did so, and challenged the whites to be true to their race by supporting their party. They had tried in vain to effect some kind of compromise to break the solid ranks of the negroes under their Radical leaders in order to avoid the race issue in politics. There was now but one course to pursue,—that of drawing the color line just as their opponents had done. The whites in the central, eastern, and southern counties of the State had borne patiently the results of Reconstruction. They had in their local offices, and as their representatives in the legislature, their former servants—carriage-drivers, butlers, shoemakers, and field hands—and self-seeking white adventurers from without the State, and native demagogues. Some of the negro officers were honest and capable men who exerted a good influence over their people; but even these were lacking in training and experience to represent educated white constituencies, which had always possessed a genius for politics and high standard for its officers. According to Dr. W. H. Ruffner, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, there was in these counties “one agonizing desire; it is for *honest, enlightened, local government*, and for deliverance not only from the actual incubus, but from the constant dread, of semi-barbarous rule.”²² The weakening of the Republican party by the many political scandals during President Grant’s administration, and by the panic of 1873, diverted the mind of the North from Southern affairs and gave the Conservatives in Virginia more freedom from outside influence in politics. It was also at this time that there occurred the famous decisions of the Federal

²¹*The Nation*, November 6, 1873. The question was asked in an editorial in the *Richmond Dispatch*, March 4, 1873: “Shall the whites rule and take care of the negroes, or shall the negroes rule and take care of the whites?” There was no longer a compromise here.

²²*Virginia School Report*, 1873, p. 204.

Supreme Court in the Slaughter House Cases, which marked a reaction in that court against the undue interference of the Federal government in the political affairs of the individual states.

During the campaign of 1873, the Radicals adjured the negroes to support their party and reminded them that the whites, or Conservatives, had once held them in slavery and would do so again if they could control the government. In answer, the Conservatives urged the whites to be loyal to their race and to remember the crimes committed under negro local rule in the State. For example, reference was made to the ravishing of an old lady by two of Kellogg's colored policemen, of which deed the *Lynchburg News* said, "It seems monstrous to suppose that any white man, having a mother, sister, wife or daughter, can march up to the polls and vote to place in power a party which connives at such outrages."²³ The horrible example of Radical-negro rule that could then be seen in other Southern states afforded the white Conservatives an ample and just reason for the existence of their party.

The election resulted in the defeat of the Republicans. Kemper won with a majority of 27,239 votes out of the 214,237 cast. Withers and Daniel were also elected. In the General Assembly the Conservatives had as the result of the election 33 men in the Senate and 99 in the House of Delegates. The Republicans had 9 men in the Senate and 33 in the House. A third of the Republicans in the Senate and over a half of the Republicans in the House were colored.²⁴

One of the hardest things for outsiders to realize was the friendly relations that still existed between the members of

²³*The Nation*, November 6, 1873.

²⁴*Warrock-Richardson Almanac*, 1874; *Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia*, 1873; *The Richmond Dispatch*, November 17, 1873.

During the legislative session of 1874, Colonel Robert E. Withers was chosen United States Senator. His closest opponent in the contest for the position was James P. Evans, a negro, who received fifteen votes, all but one of which were colored. Virginia now had two Conservative United States Senators. *Journal of the House of Delegates*, 1874, pp. 72-73.

the two races in Virginia outside of politics. In spite of bitterness engendered by political strife and outside interference, when blacks met whites in everyday life, the old attachment that had existed between master and servant before the war continued to exist. The negroes did not cease to look to the whites for protection, advice, and employment; and the whites depended upon the negroes for their labor. In speaking of this in 1873, Dr. Ruffner said, "In spite of the political contests in the race line, the personal relations between the white and colored people are not only friendly, but are more free and genial than commonly exist between the corresponding classes of whites."²⁵ In his message to the General Assembly of January 1, 1874, Governor Kemper pointed to the fact that there was not a single discrimination in regard to race in the laws of the State, and that the Federal government had not had a single occasion to interfere in the domestic affairs of the State upon the pretext of injustice or inequality in the Virginia code of laws, or in their application and enforcement between the races. In reference to the recent defeat of the carpetbaggers, he said, "Recent events prove how futile, and how disastrous to its authors, must be any attempt to array the colored race as a political combination upon any principle of antagonism between the races. All such attempted combinations of the past are dissolved and dispersed and we are afforded a golden opportunity for settling forever the internal jealousies which have hindered our material progress, and for completing the pacification of all elements of the body politic." The Governor advocated the division of the races socially and their mutual aid along all lines of progress. He desired the moral and educational betterment of the colored people. In political affairs, he was confident that the white people would lead, on account of their superior numbers, wealth, political training, and intelligence.²⁶

The growing strength of the Conservative party was fur-

²⁵*The Virginia School Report*, 1873.

²⁶*Journal and Documents of the House of Delegates*, 1874, pp. 10-11.

ther shown in the returns of the Congressional elections in the fall of that year, 1874. With the exception of one representative, William H. H. Stowell, administration candidate from the Fourth District, all the representatives elected were Conservatives. Excitement ran high during these political campaigns. John Goode defeated James H. Platt, of Vermont, in a warmly contested election for a seat in Congress from the district in which Norfolk city is located. Platt had made himself exceedingly obnoxious to the white people of the district and Goode gives the following account of the reception that he received upon his victory over Platt:

“The city was brilliantly illuminated and nearly the entire population turned out to meet me at the station, and with a torchlight procession escorted me to my house.”²⁷

In this district the negroes nominated as candidate one of their number, Robert Norton, in a mass meeting at Yorktown.

After the defeat of the Radicals at the polls the Conservatives, under the guidance of their old leaders, proceeded with the undoing of Reconstruction in the State. Resolutions had already been adopted by the previous Assembly to amend the article in the Underwood Constitution relating to county organization.²⁸ These resolutions were now finally adopted. The amendments, therein, provided for the abolition of a third of the local officers, and for changing the name “township” (which was a constant reminder of Reconstruction adventurers who had introduced the township system in the Commonwealth) to “magisterial district,” the old name. This amendment was submitted to the people in the fall of 1874 and was ratified by a good majority.

Governor Kemper was not satisfied with the amendment because it was not drastic enough, and strongly advocated further amendments. “That instrument,” he said, referring to the Underwood Constitution, “imposes upon the impover-

²⁷John Goode, *Recollections of a Lifetime*, pp. 107 ff.

²⁸*Acts of Assembly, 1872-1873*, p. 274; *Journal and Documents of the House of Delegates, 1874*, pp. 20-24.

ished and sparse population of Virginia a frame-work of state and local government so complicated and costly that it must of necessity be oppressive in any but a densely settled state. After Virginia had been stripped of a third of her territory and more than half of her material values—when the legislature should have been reduced in numbers one-half, and the government conformed to the diminished size and resources of the State—the legislative department was made relatively large, its session twice as frequent, and the whole machinery of the government more expensive than when the State was powerful, rich, and prosperous. The Constitution is full of details which belong only to the domain of ordinary legislation. It puts unusual and meddlesome restrictions upon the legislative power, which cripple the government in its efforts to equalize the burdens of taxation, and to restore the state credit. It contains provisions and allusions touching our past history which are irritating and offensive to a majority of the people.”²⁹ Furthermore, he said, it had abolished the “an- because ti was not drastic enough, and strongly advocated cient, honest and manly mode of voting by the living voice,” and had substituted the secret ballot, a source of fraud, dissimulation and falsehood.

During the session of 1874-1875 the legislature, acting upon the Governor’s advice, again laid violent hands upon the Underwood Constitution, and the reaction against Reconstruction went on apace. Two sets of amendments were adopted for submission to popular vote. The first of these dealt with that part of the constitution relating to the elective franchise and qualifications for office; the second with the article relating to the legislative department. To the former disqualifications from voting—insanity, bribery at elections, embezzlement of public funds, duelling (or aiding in a duel), treason and felony,—was added petit larceny. The following oath, that had been required of “every person offering or applying to register,” was stricken from the constitution:

²⁹*Journal and Documents of the House of Delegates*, 1874, pp. 482-484.

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am not disqualified from exercising the right of suffrage by the Constitution framed by the Convention which assembled in the City of Richmond, on the third day of December, eighteen hundred and sixty-seven, and that I will support and defend the same to the best of my ability."³⁰

Thus an unhappy reminder of the past was removed and the ground was cleared of this obstacle to tender consciences in the future.

By the second group of amendments, adopted at this time, the number of members of the House of Delegates was reduced from 132 to not over 100; the General Assembly would meet biennially instead of annually; power was given the General Assembly to provide for the government of cities and towns, and to establish such courts therein as might be necessary for the administration of justice; the General Assembly was given the power to remove disabilities incurred by aiding or participating in duelling; and finally, the former custom of requiring the payment of a poll tax as a requisite for voting was revived.

This tax requirement did not prove satisfactory as there was no provision made for a set time for the payment of the tax before the elections. It was consequently often paid at the last moment for the voter. Fraud resulted, and much money was needed by each party for the purchasing of votes. Furthermore, some of the poorer whites were disfranchised thereby. When the Readjuster party came into power in 1880, the legislature proposed an amendment to abolish that part of the constitution. The amendment, according to law, had to be passed by a second session of the legislature. It was approved a second time and was ratified by the people in 1882.

³⁰*Acts of Assembly, 1874-1875, p. 399, ch. 313. Submitted to the people by act of the General Assembly, Acts, 1875-1876, p. 82, ch. 87, p. 87, ch. 88. The amendments were ratified by a large majority. Even at this date Federal troops were used at the polls in Petersburg.*

There was no change in the suffrage after this until 1902.³¹

Although the poll tax requirement as a requisite for voting may have been aimed chiefly at the negro,³² who it was believed would not pay his poll tax, the fiscal need for the law was largely responsible for its existence. The change in the constitution was strongly urged by Governor Walker at the beginning of his administration on this account. In 1873, Dr. Ruffner advocated the payment of a two dollar poll tax as a requisite for voting in order to provide money for the public schools. He reminded the people of the fact that it was the custom in Virginia before 1867 to require tax receipts of those desiring to vote, and cited this as "evidence that this movement (for the poll tax requirement) was not aimed at the rights and privileges of any particular color or condition."³³ He said furthermore that the restrictions on the franchise that existed in some parts of New England at that time were much more severe. In Connecticut, for example, no man could vote who could not read; and in Massachusetts the ability to read and write was required of voters.

The change in the constitution which placed the form of administration for the respective cities in the hands of the legislature, was one of the most important adopted at this time. This, like several other contemporaneous changes, was designed to deliver the local governments of the black belt out of the hands of the negroes and their leaders.

³¹J. A. C. Chandler, *The History of Suffrage in Virginia*, Johns Hopkins University Studies, 19th Series.

For the acts relating to these amendments, see *Acts of Assembly*, 1874-1875, p. 399, ch. 313. Submitted to the people by the act of the Assembly, 1875-1876, p. 82, ch. 87; p. 87, ch. 88.

The amendment relating to duelling was made in behalf of some of the old leaders who had participated in duelling. Duelling existed in Virginia until about 1880 in spite of the better judgment and the disapproval not only of the people in general but also of those who participated in them. For an interesting account of the last and most famous of the post-bellum duels fought in Virginia and of the attitude of one who figured prominently in these affairs and in Virginia politics of the period, see W. L. Royall, *Some Reminiscences*, pp. 64-100.

³²The *Richmond Dispatch*, February 28, 1880.

³³*Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of Virginia*, 1873.

It was at this time that disillusionment first came to the negroes in regard to their white allies, the Radical-Republicans from abroad. Upon the failure to receive the Federal support which they had so earnestly prayed for, the more aspiring and capable carpetbaggers had sought other occupations or more propitious fields for their political activity. Some had joined the Conservative ranks. But the less capable of these unwelcome invaders still lingered in the black counties, courting favor with the colored people in order to win an office here and there. These men had, by their familiarity with the colored people, and by their lack of real sympathy and regard for them, brought upon themselves the contempt of the negroes, who, after all, still prided themselves on their friendship with the better class of whites. Financial troubles had diverted the attention of the people of the North from their former wards at the South. The negroes now began to realize that they were not only forsaken by their former political allies, but also that the whites were no longer in the mood to compromise in political affairs.

The colored voters gave vent to their dissatisfaction in a state convention held at Richmond on August 20, 1875. The meeting was called for the purpose of preserving the rights of the colored people, and of securing redress for the wrongs which, they asserted, they had received at the hands of the local authorities, and at the hands of the Republican leaders in Richmond and Washington. There were many delegates present from all parts of the State. Like former Radical gatherings of this kind, it was characterized by much speaking, excitement, and confusion. Resolutions were adopted as follows:

“Believing in a republican form of government, such as emanated from the reversionary right of all power, it should not or would not be deemed improper or impertinent for us, who represent nine-tenths of the Republican voters of Virginia, to state candidly and earnestly some of our grievances, which we have borne patiently as a party and as a class. * * *

“*Resolved*, That we look with the utmost anxiety and alarm

at the condition of disorganization and disaffection existing in the party in the state, caused by the appointment of a number of Federal office-holders all over the state, many instances of which occur to us who are pronounced Democrats, who would blush Judas-like were Republican sentiments imputed to them; and of others who are an incubus to the party, and are preparing the way for a precipitate desertion into the Democratic lines in case the late lamented Confederacy shall succeed in establishing its power and supremacy again in 1876.”³⁴

The proposed amendment of the constitution making petty larceny a cause of disfranchisement was discussed by members of the convention and denounced as an unjust discrimination against their race. Resolutions were adopted to that effect.³⁵ One delegate said, “It is hard that a poor negro cannot take a few chickens without losing his right to vote.”

The effects of the end of carpetbag rule, and of the operation of the new legislation undoing Reconstruction, may be seen in the results of the elections of 1877 and 1878. As the result of the former election, the number of Republican members of the House of Delegates was reduced from twenty-two to nine. There were only seven negroes left in the legislature. The representatives elected to Congress in 1878 were Conservatives, with the exception of one Republican from the Fourth District. Now that the Conservative party was no longer held together by the race question and the Republican party had become practically a negro organization, the number of independent members of the House of Delegates had increased from six to twenty-three.

The negroes, who had been “noisy and jubilant” over Hayes’s election in the national contest of 1876,³⁶ did not

³⁴*Appleton’s Annual Cyclopædia*, 1875.

³⁵See contemporary newspapers, the *Richmond Dispatch*, *Whig* and *Examiner*; *Appleton’s Annual Encyclopædia*, 1875.

³⁶Alderman and Gordon, *J. L. M. Curry, A Biography*, p. 235.

realize that his election meant a compromise between the North and the South; nor did they suspect that it marked the beginning of a deadlock between the great political parties which was to exist from 1875 to 1879, and which was to prevent all interference in Southern affairs by the national government. Furthermore, there were many in both sections who had begun to say, in the words of an eminent Southerner, "I am tired of this turmoil and distrust. I want a country I can love."³⁷

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 235. See also p. 238. Hayes offered Curry a place in his cabinet and even considered giving General Joseph E. Johnston a place there.

CHAPTER IX

THE READJUSTER PERIOD, 1879-1883, AND THE STATE DEBT SETTLEMENT

After the elimination of the carpetbaggers and the undoing of a large part of their work in the early seventies, little of interest occurs in the political history of the State until the debt controversy gave birth to the Readjuster party in 1879, and revived the race question in politics. The recrudescence of the race question has occurred in Virginia politics only in times of political stress, when the negro vote has been necessary to keep certain elements in power. Just as the carpetbaggers had thus won supremacy for a short time during Reconstruction, and had made the race question a political issue during the several years that followed in order to regain their supremacy, so General William Mahone—taking advantage of the debt problem—built up a powerful political machine with the aid of the negro votes, dominated state politics from 1879 to 1883 and, after his defeat, continued to make the race question a campaign issue for several years longer, with the hope of regaining power.

The Readjuster movement grew out of the inability of the people of Virginia in their crippled financial condition to construct a satisfactory policy in regard to the state debt. The history of this movement is one of great interest and importance as a chapter in Virginia history, during a critical period. It resembled the days of Reconstruction in its radical tendencies, and in the type of its leaders, who used the negro vote to further their ends. Its influence on party alignment may still be perceived.

The state debt of Virginia presented to her people one of

the hardest and most distressing problems which followed the war. It was a menace to the peace and prosperity of the Commonwealth for almost a generation. With the exception of a small debt created by the "Restored Government," Virginia had incurred no debt since 1861 which the Federal Constitution allowed her to pay. When she seceded on April 17, 1861, her public debt (including \$675,358.85 interest due) amounted to \$35,334,740.23. On April 30, 1871, the debt, with accumulated interest, of the newly constructed state, amounted to \$45,350,511.91.¹

The principal of this debt had been made in the best interest of the Commonwealth, and at a time when it could well afford to incur such indebtedness. Had war not intervened, the great part of the investments for which most of the debt was made would have been sound. A proper understanding of the controversy over it can only be had through a knowledge of how and for what purpose the debt was incurred.²

Most of the debt was contracted for internal improvements. Virginia began as early as 1787 to subscribe to the stock of internal improvement companies. It was largely through the influence of George Washington that the State took this step in lending its aid to private enterprises. In 1816, the General Assembly of Virginia created a fund for internal improvements, and also a Board of Public Works, in whose charge this fund was placed. During the session of 1819-1820, the State modified her former policy by assuming unaided the completion of certain great works of internal improvement, while continuing aid to smaller companies through the Board of Public Works. The first of the great corporations was the James River Company, which the State purchased from its

¹This included unpaid interest from April 17, 1861, to April 10, 1865, amounting to \$4,303,079.85 and the unpaid interest on bonds funded under Act of March 2, 1866, amounting, on April 10, 1871, to \$1,740,435.32. The one-third later deducted as West Virginia's share is included in the above figure. Statement of Second Auditor, in *Senate, Journal and Documents*, 1877-78, Document No. XXV.

²R. L. Morton, "The Virginia State Debt and Internal Improvements—1820-38, *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. XXV, No. 4.

owners in 1820. The Commonwealth proposed to connect the tidewater with the Ohio River by opening up the James and Kanawha Rivers, and connecting them with an improved turnpike. By an Act of February 17, 1820, the legislature authorized the State to borrow \$200,000 for this enterprise. It was under authority of this act that Virginia issued her first bonds. Three years later the office of Second Auditor was created to keep the account of the corporations managed by the Commonwealth, and a state engineer was employed. By 1833, the debt had passed the one million dollar mark and in 1837, exceeded three and one-half millions. In that year, the State was aiding, in addition to river improvement, canal and turnpike companies, seven railroad companies. Progress, however, had been slow on account of political and sectional discord and because the people as a whole continued to favor canals rather than railroads.

The year 1838 marked a turning point in the history of the state debt. In that year, the General Assembly, under the able leadership of Alexander H. H. Stuart, of Augusta County, determined to "embark fully on a system of internal improvement." Provision was made for supplying the necessary funds on the pledge of the public credit. By January 1, 1852, the State had obtained in this manner \$13,523,655.87. The Convention of 1850 greatly stimulated interest in public affairs and liberalized the government. This resulted in increased expenditure and a growing debt. From January 1, 1852, to January 1, 1861, Virginia expended in this way \$25,187,301.35, making a total to that date of \$38,710,857.22.³

Several million dollars of state bonds were, however,

³This included a million dollars expended in buildings of the University of Virginia, the Eastern and Western hospitals for the insane and for the institution for the deaf and dumb, and a half million to pay for the Washington Monument in Richmond. \$34,323,147.72 was expended for internal improvement within the present limits of Virginia.

Senator Bradley T. Johnson, "Report of the Senate Committee on Finance Relative to the Public Debt," in *Senate, Journal and Documents*, 1877-78, Document No. XXIV.

owned by the state government itself and were held in its Fund for Internal Improvement and in its Literary Fund. When a representative General Assembly met in December, 1865, three questions confronted them. First, what was the actual amount of debt which the State was under obligation to pay; second, to what extent was it able to meet its obligations, and, third, in what manner could it fulfill its duty to its impoverished citizens, and at the same time be just to its creditors. "The debt, with its interest, must be paid," said Governor Peirpoint in his message to that body (December 4, 1865); "at the same time, we must look to the ability of the people to pay." The doubt here expressed as to the ability of the people to pay was troubling the minds of the citizens. The failure of almost the entire wheat crop added further to general depression.

As soon as the legislature of 1865 convened, the finance committee of the two Houses began to study the debt question. On February 20, 1866, "a bill to provide for funding the interest on the public debt" was reported from the Committee. On March 2, 1866, the bill was passed unanimously by both Houses. It provided for the assumption of the whole debt of ante-bellum Virginia and of "Restored" Virginia. It further provided that the bond-holders should be given state interest-bearing bonds for the interest due them. In order to quiet disturbing rumors, the General Assembly, which convened on December 11, 1866, passed a joint resolution that the Commonwealth did not intend to repudiate any of her debt.

It was not long after the passage of this resolution that Congressional Reconstruction settled down like a cloud over Virginia. The people in "Military District Number 1" were forced to let the debt slumber while the interest accumulated.

Attention has already been called to Governor Walker's exaggerated estimate of Virginia's resources, and of the consequent passage of the Funding Act of March 30, 1871, which

required the annual expenditure for interest of \$1,865,450.90, a burden which could not have been borne at that time.

The attempt of the legislature of 1871-1872 to defeat the acceptance of interest coupons in lieu of taxes and other dues to the State, the accumulating deficit in the revenue of the State, and its inability to make satisfactory arrangements with the bond-holders were fast increasing dissatisfaction among tax payers and bond-holders alike. The Commonwealth was falling behind in her revenues; her creditors and her public schools were suffering; economic depression had followed; and the insistence on the part of the bond-holders that they should be paid added to the discomfort of the citizens.

The creditors and the world at large had been given reason to believe from the official statements of Governor Walker that the resources of Virginia, which had suffered four years as a battle field, had been but little diminished. He had said that if the lands of the Commonwealth were fairly assessed, there would be enough revenue without increasing the rate of taxation to pay the interest on the public debt and to defray the current expenses of the state government. After such official statements, it was only natural that those who were not in the position to know the real condition of affairs should have looked upon the defalcation of the payment of interest on the bonds, and the attempts to defeat the purpose of the Funding Act as bad faith on the part of the people of Virginia. As a consequence, British financiers were, not only refusing to loan money in the State, but also were in some cases advising others to follow their example. Financial distress resulted.⁴

In his message of March 27, 1874, to the legislature, Governor Kemper said, "The state credit is prostrate. The best bonds of Virginia rate lower in the Stock Exchange of London than those of Egypt, Turkey, or Peru, and our credit ranks

⁴*The Nation*, November 1, 1874; *Journal and Documents of the House of Delegates*, 1874-1875, Document No. 1.

in the grade of such countries as Mexico and San Domingo. No grosser fallacy can be conceived than the one which claims that a commonwealth can flourish while its credit is in a state of prostration or dishonor."

To outward appearances the scars of war were to some extent healed. Farm buildings, implements, fences, and other property that had been taken away or destroyed by contending armies were being replaced. But the increase in such property was balanced by the debt incurred in procuring it. The prosperity of Virginia, whose population was almost entirely rural, depended upon its agriculture. The national census of 1870 shows that the number of acres in cultivation within the limits of the present Commonwealth was less by over two million in 1870 than in 1860; that the number of pounds of tobacco had been reduced two-thirds; and that the number of bushels of corn and wheat had been reduced to about half. Of twenty-four and one-half million acres of land only about 8,100,000 were improved farm land. This productive portion had to bear the burden of taxation for the entire State. Added to the loss of men and capital during the war, there had been, since its close, bad seasons for crops and a lack of dependable labor. The labor system had become completely disorganized and demoralized. The negroes were still enjoying the novelty of their new condition and could not be depended upon to remain at work. On the average they were producing little besides food and clothing for themselves; and there was no other labor to be had in a large section of Virginia.⁵

The statement of Governor Walker that the state assessment of property was too low was erroneous. The national valuation of all property, real and personal, in Virginia in 1870, was \$409,588,133. The state valuation of the same prop-

⁵*Journal and Documents of the House of Delegates, 1874-1875, p. 16; Ibid., Document No. 1; P. A. Bruce, The Plantation Negro as a Freeman, chs. XII, XIII, XIV; contemporary accounts in newspapers and personal reminiscences.*

erty was \$336,686,433.23 or 82 per cent of the national assessment. In the United States as a whole, the national valuation of that year was 32 per cent higher than the state valuation, and in the six New England commonwealths, together with New York and Pennsylvania, a contiguous group of prosperous communities, the aggregate valuation of the respective state assessments was only 42 per cent of the aggregate Federal valuation in those states. This was evidence of the fact that the state assessment in Virginia was relatively very high.⁶

The Commonwealth was at a lower ebb economically in 1875 than in the hopeful year just after peace was made in 1865. The decrease in realty values had occurred in all the counties of the State except in seventeen or eighteen, mostly white counties of the Southwest; and in a large part of the black belt they decreased over twenty-five per cent.⁷

The State's revenue for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1873, excluding the cost of collection, amounted to \$2,421,945.41. During the year there was collected from the people in local taxes, excluding the cost of collection, \$2,217,538.49. Thus there was a net aggregate of \$4,639,483.90 paid yearly (this being an average paid) in taxes by the people. Large amounts collected as corporation and Federal taxes were not included in this sum.⁸

Payment in full that year of the interest on the state debt assumed by the Funding Act would have necessitated the increase in the state and local taxes (exclusive of corporation and Federal taxes) to \$5,964,425.77 because the revenues for that fiscal year had fallen \$1,324,941.87 short of the necessary amount for the support of the government and the payment of this interest.⁹

⁶*Journal and Documents of the House of Delegates, 1874-1875, Document No. 1.*

⁷C. C. Pearson, *The Readjuster Movement in Virginia*, map opposite page 66.

⁸*Journal and Documents of the House of Delegates, 1874, p. 346 ff.*

⁹State Collections and Disbursements in Virginia, 1869-1877:

In his inaugural address of January 1, 1874, Governor Kemper voiced the sentiments of the conservative white citizens when he said, "Obligations to public creditors, binding the honor and good faith of the Commonwealth, should be fulfilled to the utmost of her ability in any event and under all circumstances. No other calamity could inflict greater detriment, either moral or pecuniary, upon the whole body of the people than a deliberate breach of public honor." He recommended the taxation of such subjects as had been exempted in the past, strict economy, and the elimination of all unnecessary offices. He hoped that by these means Virginia could meet her obligations, without further increase in the existing taxes. These measures, however, could only be taken for the most part by amending the constitution—a process requiring at least two years. And there was need of immediate relief. Further direct taxes on real and personal property would mean at this time the virtual confiscation of private property. Some other remedy was necessary. In a message to the legislature in March, 1874, Governor Kemper said, "Our relief is in the restoration of confidence and understanding between the State and her creditors; and in such a settlement of the public indebtedness as will restore respect in our good faith, as will command the assent of creditors and secure to them the regular payment of the utmost interest we are now able to pay, only postponing such part of our undertaking as our poverty renders impossible of performance for the present. It is

Year	Total State revenue	Ordinary expenses of government	Extraordinary expenses of government	Paid from State treasury for public schools	Paid on interest on debt	Total dis- bursements
1869-'70	\$1,487,353.84	\$1,041,682.22	\$ 17,933.60	.....	\$ 346,034.86	\$1,405,650.68*
1870-'71	2,732,456.75	1,243,682.66	129,548.05	\$382,000.00	99,980.05	1,855,210.76*
1871-'72	2,160,598.36	1,098,808.83	40,026.83	385,994.26	639,114.65	2,163,944.57*
1872-'73	2,421,945.41	1,082,536.00	13,885.54	375,000.00	1,290,758.79	2,762,180.32*
1873-'74	2,578,938.25	1,057,975.14	55,407.52	345,000.00	1,691,191.96	3,149,574.62*
1874-'75	2,647,790.05	980,450.89	28,177.65	423,000.00	1,417,345.41	2,848,973.95†
1875-'76	2,679,339.66	975,282.85	138,432.83	443,000.00	1,105,305.88	2,662,021.56‡
1876-'77	2,505,387.17	967,393.42	92,252.52	326,266.46	1,062,110.17	2,448,022.57||

* *Journal and Documents of the House of Delegates*, 1874-1875, Documents No. 1, p. 24; *Senate Journal and Documents*, 1875-1876, p. 15.

† *Senate Journal and Documents*, 1875-1876, p. 15.

‡ *House Journal and Documents*, 1876-1877, p. 11.

|| *Ibid.*, 1877-1878, p. 12.

certainly in our power, if we now enact a just and efficient system of taxation, and prudently husband our resources to pay, henceforward, four per centum per annum on the entire debt intended to be assumed by the Funding Act. It is believed that an understanding can be had with creditors by which we might guarantee with certainty the regular and punctual payment, in semi-annual instalments and at convenient places, of two-thirds of the accruing interest for the present, giving proper certificates for the deferred interest and providing for the full interest, together with all arrearages on interest account, as soon as our steadily increasing resources shall permit. * * *

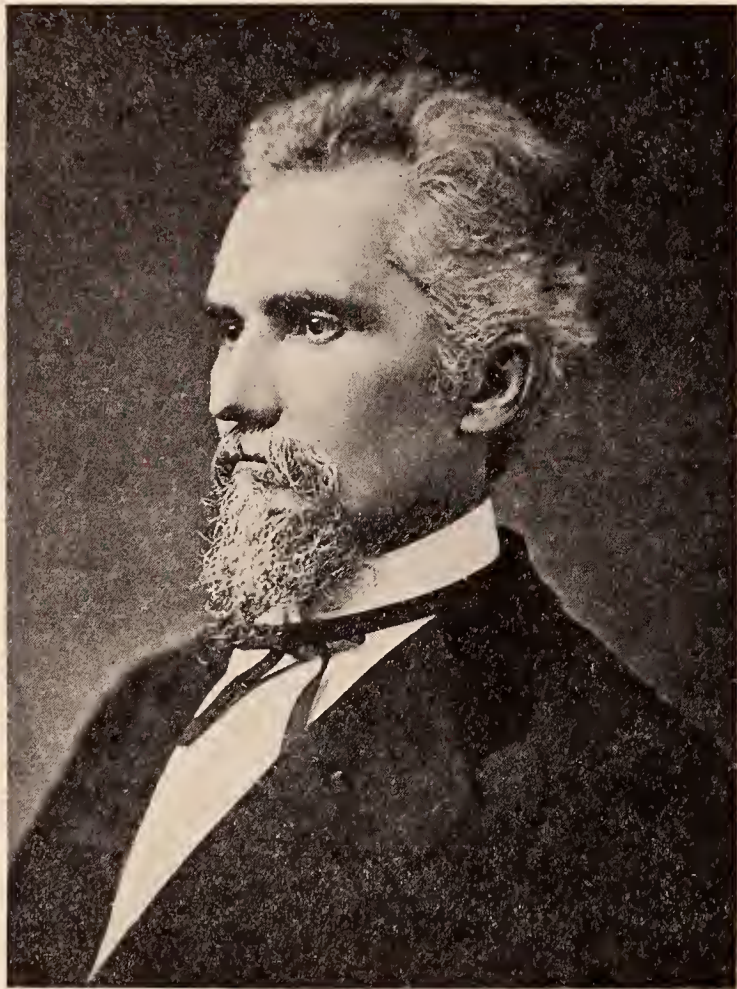
“No other obligation can be said to be superior to that which pledges the honor of the State to public creditors, except the obligation to preserve the life of the Commonwealth.”¹⁰

In order to compromise with the creditors, and thereby effect an honorable settlement of the debt question, the Governor and Treasurer, with the approval of the legislature, called a meeting of the domestic and foreign bondholders in Richmond in November, 1874.¹¹ The meeting bore no immediate fruit in legislation, but the creditors were made to realize the real financial condition of the State, which they had never realized before. Hugh McCulloch was a representative of the foreign bondholders at the meeting; and it was due, doubtless, to his influence that they were afterwards less severe in their criticism of Virginia's attitude towards them.

The members in the General Assembly of 1877 were elected on the issue of the state debt. The old party lines of Radicals and Conservatives were broken. As a result, twenty-two independents found seats in the legislature. This was the beginning of party demoralization which lasted until 1883. The elimination of the Republican party as a considerable factor in state politics, the subsequent relief from the race question for a time, the grange movement, and the state debt, divided

¹⁰*Journal and Documents of the House of Delegates*, 1874, p. 348.

¹¹“Proceedings of a Conference with Virginia Creditors,” Senate Document No. 1, November, 1874. *Senate Journal and Documents*, 1874-1875.



FREDERICK W. M. HOLLIDAY
Governor 1878-1882

the voters into numerous factions. But most of the independents and not a few of the others were followers of Mahone and advocated his plans of "readjustment," or partial repudiation of the interest on the debt. Mahone had proved unsuccessful in the extensive railroad interests which he controlled. He had also failed by a small margin to receive the nomination for governor in the Democratic convention in 1877. He, therefore, seized upon the idea of readjustment as a means of bringing himself into power. The general feeling of discontent, the looseness in party lines, the bad economic condition of the State, and the certainty of gaining the entire negro vote if he opposed the conservative whites, made the time propitious for his plot. Furthermore, he now had a large following in the General Assembly. The election of Colonel F. W. M. Holliday, an able and staunch "debt payer," however, neutralized Mahone's power in the legislature, since the Readjuster vote was not strong enough to override the executive veto.¹²

Practically the entire time of the legislature was consumed by the debt problem. Since this problem affected the expenditures of the State in a most vital manner, all legislation of importance depended directly or indirectly upon its settlement. Governor Holliday in his message of December 4, 1878, lamented that the debt question had been "taken from the field of business, where it properly belongs, and dragged into the arena of politics." But it would have been difficult to have kept from popular reach a matter which entered into the pocket books of the people in a very real manner. The first Auditor's report showed an annual deficit of \$854,952.97. At that time,

¹²Governor Frederick William Markey Holliday was born in Winchester, Virginia, February 22, 1828. He graduated from Yale College and received his degree of law from the University of Virginia. He was a gentleman of the old school, well read, and well traveled. After receiving his commission as colonel in the Stonewall Brigade, he lost his right arm at the battle of Cedar Run. He then was elected to the Confederate Congress, where he remained until the end of the war. He died at Winchester May 20, 1899.

comparatively few schools in the rural districts had been opened because the teachers' salaries had not been paid.¹³

Governor Holliday attempted, without success, to borrow \$200,000 from two banks of Richmond to pay the teachers the money which the State owed them.¹⁴ In his message of December 4, 1878, he described the public school system as the "greatest benefaction of which we have any record in history." It was established, he said, "by the approval of every class, educated and ignorant, rich and poor, as an offering to the present and rising generation, and as a promise of the future greatness of the Commonwealth." In spite of his sincere attachment to the public schools, however, he did not believe that they should be supported at the expense of the public credit. School revenue had been diverted by the state government to aid in meeting interest to her creditors. It was the belief of the administration that the schools should bear their part of the burden, and that the good name and credit of the Commonwealth should be preserved at all costs. However, the Henkel bill of 1878 was passed providing that seventy-five per cent of the taxes assessed in each county or city for school purposes should be retained in that local area for school warrants. It was furthermore provided that the Auditor should pay over to the school fund \$15,000 every three months on the amount still due that fund. This law remained a dead letter until the Readjusters came into complete control of the state government in 1880. The Grandstaff bill was then passed reserving ninety per cent of the assessed school taxes to each local unit and directing the Auditor to pay \$25,000 each quarter on school arrears.

Governor Holliday, at the beginning of his administration, recommended an increase in taxation. By the Governor's estimate, it was necessary, in order to meet the situation, that there should be "no less an increase than from thirty to forty cents on the hundred dollars of property as at present as-

¹³*Senate Journal and Documents*, 1878-1879, Document No. 4.

¹⁴*Senate Journal and Documents*, 1878-1879, Document No. 6.

sessed, or the finding of other subjects for which of late so much diligent search has been made, and of which as yet so few can be found.”

On March 4, 1879, the Governor called the legislature to meet in order to dispose of this grave question, “that angry controversy may end, and peace and quiet bring that prosperity which will surely follow and which the people of Virginia long for so earnestly.”¹⁵ His efforts were rewarded; for after two years of ceaseless and bitter struggle between the chief executive and the legislature, the McCulloch bill was passed at the end of the session; received the Governor’s approval; and became a law March 28, 1879.¹⁶

This act offered the creditors new bonds payable in forty years with tax receivable coupons and bearing three per cent interest for ten years. The bonds were free from taxation. Under the terms offered with these bonds, it was provided that Virginia should be released definitely from its obligation for West Virginia’s third of the debt.

The new funding scheme was supported by the Council of Foreign Bondholders of London, and by prominent New York bankers. Public opinion at home and abroad favored it, and the support of the bondholders, which was necessary for its success, seemed assured. The success of the bill depended upon the ability of the Commonwealth to meet the interest payments fully and promptly. This was difficult but not impossible from the point of view of the debt-payers. So difficult was the task ahead for the State, which was in a most deplorable condition financially, that William Mahone and John E. Massey, the Readjuster leaders, found some very capable and honest supporters. But the leading classes supported the McCulloch

¹⁵*Senate Journal and Documents*, 1878-1879, p. 449.

¹⁶Named for Hugh McCulloch, who had been Secretary of the Treasury in Lincoln’s and Johnson’s cabinets. He greatly aided in affecting a compromise between the State and its bondholders.

For conference with the bondholders, see *Senate Journal and Documents*, 1878-1879, Document No. XXIV.

Act.¹⁷ This act not only assured the creditors a satisfactory adjustment of the debt, but also afforded the State a relief from its worst fiscal burdens until it would be strong enough to bear them.

It did not reduce the principal of the debt but it lightened materially the burden of interest. The annual amount of the latter to be paid under this act was \$1,249,083.45. The act itself was received by the people with much rejoicing. They believed that peace had come and that prosperity would follow. "We congratulate the honest citizens of Virginia on their great victory," said the *Norfolk Virginian*.¹⁸ But these honest citizens reckoned without Mahone and his followers, who had opposed the passage of the measure. A cloud had already arisen on the horizon that was, like Reconstruction, soon to blacken the political heavens and cover the political highways with mud. There was, moreover, sufficient warning of the trouble that was brewing. The *Richmond Whig*, now under Mahone's control, boasted on April 1, "The Readjusters are dead, are they? Then look out for a general resurrection in November next."

The McCulloch Act, like the Funding Act of 1871, provided for tax-receivable coupons which had been one of the most objectionable features of the former act. It soon became evident that the presentation of these coupons for taxes would greatly burden the finances of the State. Belief also arose that many of the coupons presented were not genuine.

Soon after the elections of 1877, Mahone had begun to organize a party to force "readjustment" upon the Commonwealth. Since the Funding Act of March, 1871, had been upheld by the highest state court, and all attempts to prevent the execution of the law declared unconstitutional, the only recourse left to Mahone for defeating the act was to fill the offices of all departments of the state government with his followers,

¹⁷*House Journal and Documents*, 1878-1879, p. 10.

¹⁸*Richmond Dispatch*, March 26, 1879.

Ibid., February 25, 1879, for John W. Daniel's defense of the measure.

who would stop at nothing to render the coupons useless as tax-paying instruments. With this end in view, Mahone called a convention which met at Richmond in Mozart Hall, February 25 and 26, 1879. All parts of Virginia were represented. There were present men of every political complexion, liberal Conservatives, Republicans, Greenbackers, and independents of various kinds. The negroes had played very little part so far in the movement. There were only about a dozen in the convention—those from Halifax and New Kent counties.

Although no positive constructive policy in regard to the debt was proposed by the convention, there was a great deal said on the subject during the two days of the meeting. The Governor and the courts were accused of having betrayed "the people" into the hands of brokers and bondholders. There was much talk of the rights of "the people" and the iniquity of the "rings." Mahone advocated a further lowering of the interest on the debt to three per cent and the settlement of the debt in forty-five years. Massey stated that interest which had accumulated during war and Reconstruction should not be paid. Finally the convention adopted a platform and an address to the people enunciating the articles of faith of the Readjuster party, which was being formed. They were in substance as follows: That the McCulloch Act was drawn up in behalf of the brokers, and that it perpetuated the most objectionable features of the Funding Act and added others; that Virginia should disown all responsibility for West Virginia's third of the debt; that, "in any settlement with the State's creditors, the annual interest of the recognized indebtedness must be brought within her revenues under the present rate of taxation; that the capacity of these revenues must be determined by deducting, therefrom, the necessary expenses of the government, the apportionment to schools, and reasonable appropriations for the support of the charitable institutions of the State;" that any settlement to be final must "rest upon the sovereignty of the State;" that no settlement could be made except by the will of the people of the State and subject to the

alteration of the legislature at any time; that "the rate of taxation is as high as can be borne, and, instead of entering into any understanding that may necessitate an increase of taxation, a diminution in public burdens should be provided for." H. H. Riddleberger was one of the most active advocates of these principles.

The intentions of the Readjusters were here made plain. A large part of the interest upon the state debt was to be repudiated, in spite of former contracts with the bond-holders and the decisions of the courts on the subject. It was claimed that the State was bankrupt and could not do otherwise. A party organization was formed and the permanent chairman of the convention, Major Volaski Vaden, of New Kent County, appointed General Mahone chairman of the State Executive Committee, and, therefore, head of the party.¹⁹

The leaders of this new party were mostly self-made men. Some of them were honest in their conviction that circumstances justified readjustment. Others were more careful of their own material welfare and political advancement than of a nice observance of ethical principles. Of such as these latter was William Mahone. There were some members of the old aristocracy among the Readjusters, but they were few. Among the more able and influential Readjusters were James Barbour, William E. Cameron (editor and mayor of Petersburg), John S. Wise, Colonel Frank G. Ruffin, and William C. Pendleton.

Next to Mahone in power, and the most interesting figure in the Readjuster party, was John E. Massey, then of Albemarle County. "Parson" Massey, as he was called, was, like Mahone, a self-made man. He had been respectively teacher, lawyer, preacher, and farmer. At first a Conservative in politics, he was led to advocate readjustment through the belief that the Funding Act was unjust and that the people were not

¹⁹For proceedings of this convention, see the *Richmond Whig* and the *Richmond Dispatch* of February 26 and 27, 1879. The *Dispatch* gives the list of delegates.

receiving fair treatment at the hands of those in power at Richmond. Just as Mahone was the master organizer and intriguer of the movement, so Massey was the campaigner *par excellence*. Possessed of a reputation for piety, a knowledge of human nature, a cheerful countenance, fluency, and a ready wit, he went about the State speaking from the platform on week days and from the pulpit on Sundays. His readiness at repartee was more effective than logic in discomforting his opponents, and was especially effective among the unlettered whites and negroes.²⁰

Among the leading Funders (the opponents of the Readjusters) were, Governor Holliday; John Randolph Tucker, founder of the law school of Washington and Lee University, and for a long time professor there; John W. Daniel, later United States senator and long prominent in Virginia politics; General W. C. Wickham, a prominent business man and a conservative Republican; and J. L. M. Curry, a professor in Richmond College and later Ambassador to Madrid. The Funders had the support of the Richmond papers, with the exception of the *Whig*, which was under Mahone's control. Furthermore, they represented the great mass of the respectable and intelligent whites of the State.

The campaign of 1879 was vigorously conducted by both sides.²¹ Neither party bid for the colored votes at first, and the race question was shunned. In September, however, Massey made a speech in Petersburg, in which he indicated that negroes would be welcomed as Readjusters. The Readjusters spread the rumor among them that the Funders wished to increase their burdens and that their own party would give them more rights. Churches and societies were made use of to spread the rumor and to win the colored vote for the party.²²

The Funders now tried to divide the colored vote through some of the negro leaders. They hired negro speakers, estab-

²⁰The *Autobiography of John E. Massey*. Accounts of Contemporaries.

²¹For the Democratic platform, see the *Richmond State*, August 8, 1879.

²²C. C. Pearson, *The Readjuster Movement in Virginia*, p. 128.

lished clubs among the colored people, ran Republican candidates to split the Readjuster vote, and in six counties at least they cast their ballots for these candidates, two of whom were negroes. But these efforts did not succeed. The negroes remained under the control of their old leaders, who were now on the side of the Readjusters, and voted against the majority of the whites just as they had always done.²³ The campaign ended amid great excitement. The Readjusters with the aid of their colored allies won both houses of the legislature. They elected fifty-six out of one hundred delegates, eleven of whom were negroes; and they elected a majority of Readjuster senators, two of whom were negroes.²⁴

The most absorbing topic before the newly elected General Assembly of December, 1879, was, of course, the state debt. Having a majority in both Houses of the legislature, the Readjusters passed a bill known as the Riddleberger bill,²⁵ which embodied the plan of settlement that became the central feature of the debt controversy from this time until it ceased to be a political issue. It was vetoed by the Governor as a violation of the constitution of the United States, of the constitution of Virginia, and of "the spirit which has ever moved and inspired the traditions of the Commonwealth." Since legislation of this kind was unable to escape Governor Holliday's veto, the Readjusters had to content themselves with filling the state offices with their men, and with improving their party machinery

²³W. L. Royall, *Virginia State Debt Controversy*, pp. 27-37.

²⁴The *Richmond Dispatch*, November 14, 1879; the *Warrock Richardson Almanac*, 1879; *Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia*, 1879.

²⁵*The Nation* (March 4, 1880), Vol. XXX, p. 166) makes the following comment on the passage of this bill: "Under the lead of a popular but unscrupulous demagogue they [the Readjusters] made a dash for the control of the state government, one of the chief railway lines of the State, and, the United States senatorship, finding 'readjustment' a popular means to these ends, they used it with great success. * * * The fact that most of the Republicans voted with the repudiators, however, is a really discouraging thing. It contradicts the inference, drawn by every one at the time of the election, that the color line was broken; and they appear to have got nothing of any account in exchange for their adherence to what is probably as disreputable an organization as now exists in this country."

in order to insure the election of a Readjuster governor in 1881.

The appointment of county judges in the hundred counties of the State fell to this legislature. There were comparatively few reputable lawyers in the Readjuster party. Consequently in order to get men who would be true to the party, many incompetent and unscrupulous men were chosen. As a rule the new appointees did not bring credit upon their party and in many cases caused much scandal. To make way for these new men the supreme court judges and about three-fourths of the county and corporation judges were removed. This tampering with the judiciary, which was traditionally the most honored and incorruptible part of the state government, marks the beginning of the reaction against Mahone which led to his downfall.²⁶

The wholesale removal of officers did not end here. Directors of the state asylums and educational institutions were displaced and their positions filled with Readjusters. In like manner, practically every county and city superintendent of schools, and even the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Ruffner, were made to give way to men from the party in power. Dr. Ruffner had not only scrupulously avoided all political activity himself, but had also warned the county and city superintendents to keep the schools out of politics. He realized the power of a state official with representatives in every locality and he warned the people against the danger of bringing the schools into partisan politics. He was replaced by a man lacking fitness for the position.²⁷

The Readjusters claimed that this ruthless use of the spoils system was necessary to rid the government of inefficient "Bourbons" and to let "the people" have more voice in the government. But the appointments made in no wise justified

²⁶The *Autobiography of John E. Massey*, pp. 216-217; W. L. Royall, *State Debt Controversy*, ch. 5; Henry Robinson Pollard, *Memoirs and Sketches of My Life*, Richmond, Virginia, 1923. Accounts of Contemporaries.

²⁷*Autobiography of John E. Massey*, p. 204. Accounts of Contemporaries.

the removals. Mr. Henry Robinson Pollard tells the following story of an "extremely ignorant but wary partisan" Readjuster who had been appointed to office. He went to a Confederate judge to be sworn in as justice of the peace, stating that he wanted the judge to qualify him. "Come on, Sir," said the judge, "I'll swear you, but only God Almighty could ever qualify you." The same might have been said of scores of other newly inducted officials of that period.²⁸

Mahone was elected to the United States Senate and took his seat at the time of the special session beginning March 4, 1881. Two years later, H. H. Riddleberger, another prominent Readjuster, was elected as his colleague. They served until 1887 and 1889, respectively.

The Readjuster party had organized as a faction of the Democratic party, and Mahone had denied emphatically that he had any agreement or sympathy with the Republicans. Had Mahone and his associates declared themselves Republican sympathizers at first, they would doubtless have lost the support of most of the native white people who followed them. No white Virginian of either faction was in the mood to join the common enemy. The memory of the evil influence of the Republican party in Virginia affairs in the past could not be forgotten; and now while they were combating the evils done by that party, the Republican politicians and newspapers at the North were prodding the South with harsh criticisms and pious advice which could not veil the sectionalism and partizanship back of it all.²⁹

Hugh McCulloch truly said a few years later (1887), "It is

²⁸*Memoirs and Sketches of My Life*, Richmond, 1923, p. 207.

²⁹The following editorial from the *New York Times* of January 5, 1880, is not an extreme example of this sort of thing:

"The old slave masters must domineer and tyrannize; they must keep the colored man in subjection and misery; they must raise a barrier of intolerance against enlightened ideas, and fight against the incursion of those who would work for free institutions. * * * But one great change they must recognize. They can never again tyrannize over the nation. * * * The civilization of the South is of the past. * * * It must go down, and the sooner, the better for the South, and the better for the nation."

outside pressure—the efforts of politicians to retain or acquire power—that is keeping sectional feeling alive.”

In the fall of 1879, Mahone secretly promised the Republican leaders the support of his party in the presidential election of the following year. In order to do this, and, at the same time, keep his Democratic followers in line for the State election of 1881, Mahone induced his party convention to reject the proffer of the Funder Democrats to coalesce in national politics on an equal footing, and to present thereby a solid front for Hancock and English. As a result both Funders and Readjusters nominated electors for the Democratic candidates, although only the Funder Democrats were recognized by the national Democratic organization as the true Democratic party in Virginia. The Republicans were encouraged by this dissension in the Democratic ranks to make a vigorous campaign in the State. There were now three sets of candidates in the field. By drawing off votes from the Democratic party Mahone had accomplished his purpose of aiding the Republicans while nominally refusing to support them.³⁰ So cleverly had this master politician worked his plan that many Virginians continued to believe that he was as ardent a Democrat as he still professed to be. Circumstances, however, not only made him show his true colors, but also gave him great notoriety in Congress.

When the Federal Senate was about to organize in March, 1881, by the appointment of committees, it consisted of seventy-six members. Of these, thirty-seven were Republicans and thirty-seven were Democrats. Of the remaining two, Senator Davis, an independent from Illinois, had been elected by Democratic voters and had declared that he would affiliate with their party. It was evident, therefore, that the vote of the Readjuster Mahone, who had been elected by Democratic voters, would decide whether there would be a Democratic or a Republican organization, since the Republican

³⁰W. L. Royall, *State Debt Controversy*, ch. IV. *Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia*, 1880.”

president of the Senate could cast a deciding vote in case of a tie. General Mahone, now forced to take sides openly, cast in his fortune with the Republicans, as he had already secretly bargained to do as early as the fall of 1879. This action was of national importance since it enabled the Republicans to control the organization of the Senate and the vote in that body. Riddleberger followed his example in 1883. These men were quite willing to exchange their votes for special favors at the hands of the party. They were used as pawns by the Republicans, and received consideration only so long as their votes were of special value to them. So engrossed were they in political affairs in Virginia that they took little interest in national politics except to cast the deciding vote for the Republicans when called upon to do so.

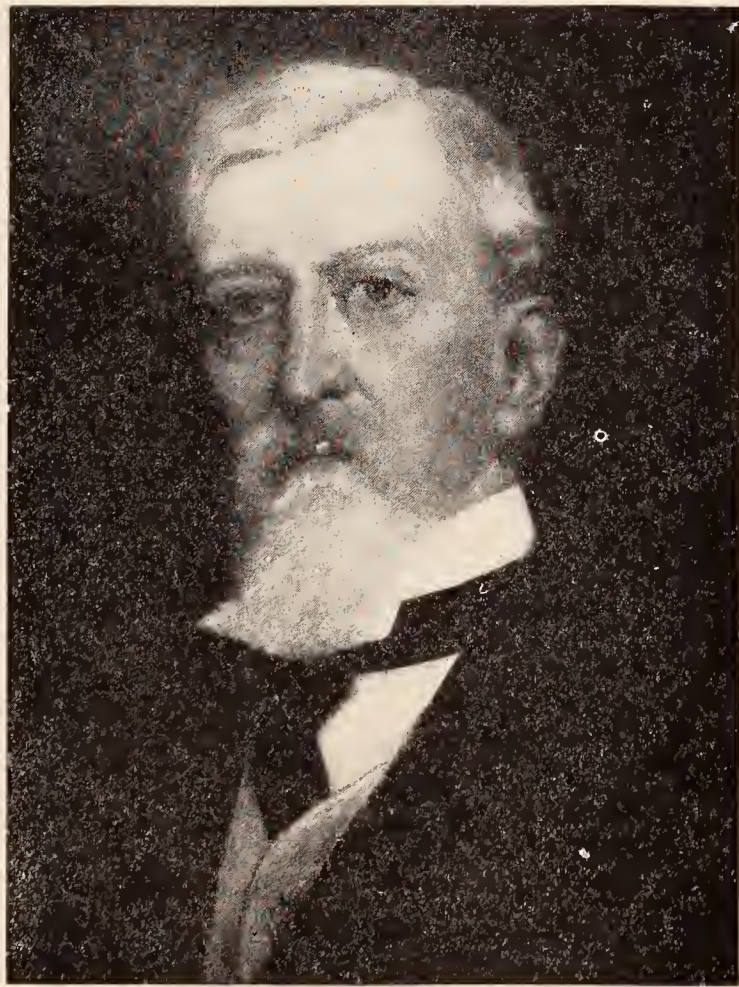
Mahone's position in the Senate, however, gave him prestige and complete control over Federal appointments in Virginia. He was also in a position now to obtain campaign funds in the North. He used his increased prestige and power to strengthen his party and his position in it. The Readjuster party was rapidly changing into Mahone's party. By working quietly through his confederates, Mahone laid his plans to further increase his power. In the fall of 1881, he had the following pledge sent to each of the candidates for the legislature for his signature:

"I hereby pledge myself to stand by the Readjuster party and platform, and to go into caucus with the Readjuster members of the legislature, and to vote for all measures, nominees, and candidates to be elected by the legislature that meets in Richmond, as the caucus may agree upon.

"Given under my hand and seal this day of September, A. D. 1881."³¹

Judge Lybrook received one of these documents enclosed with the following letter from Fernald, the collector of internal revenue at Danville, Va.:

³¹Letter of Judge Lybrook in the *Richmond Dispatch*, September 12, 1882.



WILLIAM EVAN CAMERON
Governor 1882-1886

“U. S. Internal Revenue Office,
“Danville, Va., Sept. 14, 1881.

“Dear Judge:

“I send you herewith two ‘pledges’, to sign one and have the party nominee for your county to sign the other one, and return to me, and I will forward them to General Mahone, who directed me to do this.

“Of course, it is nothing for an honest man to do and sign his hand to his faith. Please attend to this promptly.

“Fernald.”

This is an illustration of Mahone’s methods.

Since Mahone was the political boss of the State, Readjuster candidates had little chance for election without his endorsement; and the returns that fall showed that most of the candidates elected had signed the pledge.

In the elections of 1881, the Readjusters chose a majority in both Houses of the General Assembly, and all the high state officials. The following Readjuster candidates were elected: for Governor, William E. Cameron, a Readjuster-Democrat; for Lieutenant-Governor, J. F. Lewis, a Republican; and for Attorney-General, F. S. Blair, a Greenbacker. Mahone defeated the nomination for Governor, of Massey (who next to Mahone was the most powerful man in the party), because Massey would not submit to his pledges or follow him blindly.³² Massey could have thwarted Mahone’s schemes had he been chosen.

Mahone now had every reason to believe that he was supreme in Virginia politics, since he had control of his party in the State and the aid of the Federal administration. President Garfield had given him only negative support, but he had been assassinated in July, 1881, and President Arthur rendered him effective aid in the fall campaign by putting an end to the independent Republican move that was threatening to

³²W. L. Royall, *State Debt Controversy. Autobiography of John E. Massey.*

separate the Republicans from the Readjusters in Virginia.³³ Senator Don Cameron and other supporters of the administration also rendered Mahone and his party much assistance in the campaign of 1881 by collecting funds, through assessments and subscriptions. They provided Mahone with means to pay the poll taxes of the negroes in order that they might vote the Readjuster ticket.³⁴ Office-holders throughout the State were assessed by Mahone for campaign purposes.³⁵

In spite of some discontent among the Readjusters with Mahone and his political methods, they were held together by the fact that the debt question was still unsettled. In 1882, the Readjusters had for the first time an opportunity to "readjust" the state debt according to their original purpose and unhampered by the Governor's veto. Accordingly, they passed two acts known as "coupon killers," which virtually destroyed the tax receivable coupons of the Funding Act of 1871. These acts provided that, if coupons were presented in payment of taxes, a like amount in cash had to be tendered at the same time. The coupons were then received for identification and verification by the collector, who should certify them to the corporation or county court, which should, in turn, empanel a jury to decide whether they were genuine or not. If they were declared to be genuine, the cash received from the tax-payer should be returned to him and the coupons received by the treasurer in payment of taxes. The reason given in the preamble of the act for its existence was that there were many stolen and counterfeit bonds with coupons attached in circulation. But there was not sufficient evidence to show that such strenuous measures were necessary on this account.³⁶

³³W. L. Royall, *State Debt Controversy*, p. 54. *Appleton's Annual Cyclopædia*, 1881.

³⁴T. V. Cooper, *American Politics*.

³⁵*Autobiography of John E. Massey*, pp. 199, 206.

³⁶Acts of January 14 and January 26, 1882. *House Journal and Documents*, 1881-1882, Documents 2 and 8; *Senate Journal and Documents*, 1881-1882, Document 15. *Antoni v. Greenhow*, 107 U. S. R., p. 792; W. L. Royall, *State Debt Controversy*. For Readjuster view, see *Autobiography of John E. Massey*, pp. 43-47. Massey originated this method of killing the coupons.

These acts virtually destroyed the coupons by making their acceptance in payment of taxes depend upon such difficulties and expense; and the probability of their acceptance by the State was much lessened by the fact that the judges of the county and corporation courts were now for the most part Readjusters. The latter were correct in believing that the remedy given the bondholders was sufficient to prevent the laws from being unconstitutional as impairing the obligation of contract. Other "coupon killers" followed from time to time; and in spite of much litigation the scheme won out.³⁷

After the passage of the first two "coupon killers," the legislature of 1882 adopted with some qualifications, the Riddleberger Bill, which had been vetoed by Governor Holliday two years previously.³⁸ This statute restated the principal of the debt, placing it at \$21,035,377.15. It provided for the issuing of new bonds payable in fifty years at three per cent interest. Under this arrangement, the annual interest was reduced over fifty per cent and the principal was scaled about ten million dollars.³⁹ The bonds thus issued were known as "Riddlebergers." The bonds and coupons were not exempt from taxation nor were the coupons tax-receivable. Interest on the bonds, which amounted under this arrangement to \$653,888.83, was to be paid out of any money not otherwise appropriated.

In January, 1882, Mahone and his machine leaders offered to re-elect Massey Auditor of Public Accounts, but only on condition that he should submit to caucus rules. He refused to do this and was deposed accordingly by Mahone, who told Massey's friends that he had declined to accept the nomination of the Readjuster caucus.⁴⁰ But Massey had not been buried

³⁷W. L. Royall, *State Debt Controversy*, pp. 55 ff; W. L. Royall, *Some Reminiscences*. Royall was attorney for the bondholders in their fight over these Readjuster acts.

³⁸Act of February 14, 1882, *Acts of Assembly*, 1881-1882, p. 88.

³⁹In the euphemistic language of Governor McKinney, "It restated the public debt, eliminating such items as had been improperly admitted, thereby largely decreasing the principal claimed to be due." Governor McKinney's *Message, House Journal and Documents*, 1894.

⁴⁰*Autobiography of John E. Massey*, ch. xviii.

politically, as further events proved, for now that the aims of the original Readjusters had been practically accomplished, he was free to oppose Mahoneism.

There was in the General Assembly of Virginia at this time a majority of fourteen Readjusters in the House of Delegates, and a majority of six in the Senate. Mahone left his place in the Senate at Washington and came to Richmond in order to formulate such laws for his caucus as would give him supreme control over state affairs. But there were in the legislature four Readjuster senators, two former Democrats and two former Republicans, who had refused to sign the Mahone caucus pledge, and were, therefore, not bound by the caucus.⁴¹ These men, with the aid and encouragement of John E. Massey, voted with the Funders and were thereby able to defeat Mahone's measures by a majority of one in the Senate. On account of the importance of the votes of these senators at this critical time they were known as the "Big Four."⁴²

The character of the bills introduced by the caucus and defeated by the aid of these four Readjusters indicate how greatly Virginia's welfare was menaced by Mahoneism, which was the outgrowth of Readjusterism. A bill was introduced by the caucus providing for the removal of a great many of the petty officers of the State, such as notaries public, public school trustees and commissioners in chancery, in order to create vacancies for Mahone's followers. The appointment of many of these was to be made in Richmond in order to bring them under Mahone's central control. There was an attempt to gerrymander the Congressional districts in such a manner as to increase the number of representatives in the black counties, which supported Mahone and the Republican party. Mahone's paper, the *Richmond Whig*, openly asserted that should the bill, which had already passed the House by a large

⁴¹They were Samuel H. Newberry, of Bland County, and Peyton G. Hale, of Grayson County, democrats; and A. M. Lybrook, of Patrick County, and B. F. Williams, of Nottaway County, republicans.

⁴²*Autobiography of John E. Massey*, ch. xix. Royall, *State Debt Controversy*.

majority, be accepted by the Senate, Virginia would send eight, instead of two, administration representatives to Washington. The *Whig* regretted that still more could not be sent, and added, "But it is the best that can be done, and we are content.

* * * Already we have at Washington two senators and two representatives who stand firmly and cordially by President Arthur: and under this bill, if passed by the Senate, our liberal forces will send to Washington six more supporters of the Federal administration than we now have. To intrench and further it, the present apportionment bill is avowedly framed to elect eight congressmen out of ten who shall be committed and pledged to support President Arthur and his administration."⁴³

Another caucus bill provided for the creation of a board of railroad commissioners, to be chosen by the Governor. The board was to have complete supervisory control of the railroads, and could dismiss employees at its pleasure. The purpose of this was to bring the railroad systems of the State, with their numerous employees, under Mahone's control. Another caucus measure provided that judicial sales should be made only through a commissioner of sales appointed in each county by the Governor. Commissioners of sales had always been appointed by the courts as occasion demanded, and no fault has been found with that system. Furthermore, a bill was introduced which provided that the commissioners thus chosen should select a newspaper in each of their respective counties and cities which should have the exclusive right to publish their official notices. In this way, Mahone would secure both an agent and a subsidized newspaper in each county and city of the State. These and similar bills designed to further Mahone's interests were introduced into the legislature by the Readjuster caucus and failed to pass only through the aid of the recalcitrant Big Four, whom Mahone tried in vain to seduce.⁴⁴

⁴³The *Whig*, April 10, 1882.

⁴⁴Letter of Judge Lybrook (one of the Big Four) in the *Richmond Dispatch*,

Although these measures had been defeated, the Readjusters passed at this time all the laws that they had promised their constituents in the beginning. They made laws which settled the state debt along the lines originally advocated by their party; passed acts giving apportionment for public school purposes priority over appropriations for paying the interest on the public debt, and those for other causes; repealed the provision in the constitution which made the payment of poll taxes a requisite for the franchise; and passed an act to suppress dueling. They had also defeated the "Bourbon" Funder leaders. The original purposes of the Readjuster party were, therefore, accomplished. The issue in the next succeeding campaign was Mahoneism. The Readjusters now became known as the Mahoneites, and the Funders, the Anti-Mahoneites, with little change of personnel in either party. The most substantial element of the Readjuster party joined the Anti-Mahoneites, and the remainder of that party now consisted almost entirely of the old elements of the Radical party of former days; that is, the old alignment of Radical Republican leaders, drawn from the ranks of Northern immigrants and the less respectable native white politicians, with the solid mass of negro voters. Once more the national Republican party was allied with what was most disreputable in Virginia politics.

The new alignment in political affairs began to show itself in the Congressional elections of 1882. But the question of the constitutionality of the Coupon and Riddleberger Acts had not been finally disposed of by the Supreme Court of the United States, and the Funders were still hoping for a verdict against them. Then, too, it was not an easy matter for some Readjusters to come back quickly into the party they had just bitterly opposed. However, their old leader, John E. Massey, was endorsed by the Democratic State Committee as a candi-

September 12, 1882; B. B. Munford, "What is Mahoneism?", in the *Richmond State*, September 13, 1889; W. L. Royall, *State Debt Controversy*, 68-69; *Autobiography of John E. Massey*, chs. xix, xx, xxi; Appleton's *Annual Cyclopædia*, 1882.

date for Congressman-at-large from Virginia. He was opposed by the Readjuster candidate, John S. Wise, and the candidate of the few straight-out Republicans in the State, Rev. John M. Dawson, colored. It was a hard fought and bitter contest. Once in the heat of a joint debate, Wise, who had pledged himself not to fight another duel, slapped Massey in the face. Quick as a flash "Parson" Massey faced him with the words, "Sir! with combatants you are non-combatant, but with non-combatants you are combatant!" Wise was elected, and Readjusters were also chosen from five of the nine Congressional districts.⁴⁵

Mahone was once more victorious and the Conservative-Anti-Mahoneites were more than ever determined to crush him. But the Conservatives now realized that to defeat Mahone, their own organization must be strengthened and their platform further liberalized to satisfy the Readjusters who were joining their ranks.

An opportunity soon presented itself to the Conservatives to effect a compromise with the moderate Readjusters. The decision of the Supreme Court in March, 1883, that the act known as "Coupon Killer No. 1" was constitutional,⁴⁶ sustained the Readjuster party in its debt legislation. The Funders, who had been fighting to defend the Supreme Court in its former position on the question, could now accept gracefully the status quo of the difficult question as here decided and unite both Funder and Readjuster Conservatives in the attempt to defeat the corrupt rule of Mahone.

A Democratic state convention met in Lynchburg on July 25, 1883. It was well attended and very enthusiastic. Massey and other ex-Readjusters were present. The platform that was adopted advocated a number of liberal reforms, condemned Mahoneism, the bosses, and the rings, and accepted the recent settlement of the debt controversy as final.⁴⁷ This platform successfully united the Democratic party; and a new

⁴⁵The First, Second, Fourth, Seventh and Ninth.

⁴⁶*Antoni v. Greenhow*, 17 U. S. Reports, 769; W. L. Royall, *State Debt Controversy*, ch. vi; Appleton's *Annual Cyclopædia*, 1883, "Obligations of Contracts."

and complete organization upon an efficient basis gave the party new life. John S. Barbour, a railroad official of much ability, was made chairman of the state executive committee and great power over party affairs was placed in his hands. For the first time, the Conservative party assumed the name "Democratic"—an evidence of the abandonment of old issues.⁴⁸

But the strengthening of the Conservative-Democratic party did not necessarily mean its success. Mahone had a well organized party completely under his control. The local, state, and Federal offices were, for the most part, in the hands of his followers; and more effective still were the solid ranks of the negro voters, who followed Mahone's men with child-like confidence and obedience. With this solid mass of voters behind him, only a few white followers were necessary to give Mahone a majority of voters in the State. They could be found among those who had been estranged from the Democratic party by the bitterness of the state debt controversy; from among the unscrupulous or ignorant whites in the black counties; and from among the whites of the white counties which were not confronted with the danger of "Africanization" in local affairs.

The alliance with the blacks, which was the chief element of Mahone's strength, proved, in the end, to be his undoing. In order to win and keep the fealty of the colored voters, Mahone had resorted to tactics which Radical leaders had previously used in Virginia. The results were the same. Although his pretended love for the colored people resulted neither in legislation to benefit them nor in high rewards in the way of office, the colored people were given some local offices in the black counties, and they were taught that the great body of

"The Democratic party," said the platform, "accepts as final the recent settlement of the public debt pronounced constitutional by the courts of last resort, state and federal, and will oppose all agitation of the question of a disturbance of that settlement by appeal or otherwise." *The Richmond Dispatch*, July 27, 1883.

⁴⁸*The Richmond Dispatch*, July 26, 27, 28, 1883; the *Richmond Whig*, July 25, 26, Nov. 7, 1883.

whites, which made up the Democratic party, wished to bring them once more into bondage. Conditions similar to those that prevailed during the Reconstruction period existed in numerous localities throughout the Commonwealth at this time as the result. Mahone filled the offices of the state, counties, and cities, with men who were his willing tools. Some were Northerners of the carpetbag type; others were native whites of the scalawag tribe. The acts of these officers, and their inflammatory speeches, threw the credulous negroes into a high state of excitement, and caused many of them to be exceedingly disagreeable in their behavior to the whites.

The Democrats hesitated before drawing the color line; but as the campaign progressed, the attitude of their opponents induced them to recognize the race question as an issue that could not be avoided. "I am a Democrat because I am a white man and a Virginian," said Major John W. Daniel to an audience in the Southwest.⁴⁹ Excitement became more intense as the election approached, and the relations between the races grew more strained. The tenseness of feeling gave way in Danville to a street fight between whites and blacks that completely turned the scales in behalf of the Democrats in the elections, which came a few days later throughout Virginia. This conflict was known as the "Danville Riot."

Danville, a town in southeastern Virginia, had, in 1880, a population of 7,526, of which 4,397 were colored and 3,129 were white. By 1883, the percentage of negroes had become even larger. Yet in this town the whites paid in round numbers \$40,000 in taxes and the negroes paid only \$1,200, or \$800 less than the amount appropriated out of the local taxes simply for the education of the colored children of the town. Prior to 1882, Danville had no wards, and the government of the town as a whole was in the hands of the whites. But in 1882, the Mahoneites had persuaded their legislature to amend its charter so as to divide the town into three wards, with four councilmen, and one justice of the peace from each ward. The division was made in such a way as to secure for the negroes

⁴⁹The *Richmond Dispatch*, October 26, 1883.

the power of electing seven out of the twelve members of the council, all the justices of the peace, and four out of the nine policemen. One of the negro policemen served also as a health officer, and another as weighmaster of the public scales and clerk of the market. Twenty out of the twenty-four stalls of the market were rented to negroes by the town council. And the market was in a most dilapidated and filthy condition. The chairman of the council, Colonel Raulston, carpetbagger internal revenue collector at Danville, and a tool of General Mahone's, had openly avowed, upon assuming his office as chairman, that it was his aim to build up the Radical-negro party in that locality. The members of the town council were in his employ. The police courts, with their corrupt judges, were a farce. The Federal internal revenue office was also filled with negro employees, or in the language of a revenue officer of the town, "My office looks [like] Africa, because I have so many colored people in it."⁵⁰

For over a week before the election, business in Danville had given place to politics. Incendiary speeches were made to the negroes by their leaders of both races, and two mass meetings were held by them just before the riot took place on November 3. Whites were menaced by armed negroes, and white women were pushed from the sidewalk.⁵¹ Conditions

⁵⁰The following extract from a speech of W. L. Fernald, Republican (white), collector of internal revenue at Danville, which was delivered at Halifax Court House in behalf of Mahone's party, gives not only a picture of a Radical-Republican leader, but also an example of the kind of speeches that were used to inflame the colored people by Mahone's followers:

"It does those Funder overseers so much good to see a *nigger's* back whipped. Every time they see a *nigger's* back cut, they jump up and clap their heels together like game-cocks. * * * You will see colored judges and lawyers in that courthouse, and you will have good schools if the Readjusters succeed. * * * When a colored man comes out against the Readjuster party, he has sold himself. A man who goes against his race and color is a *damned scoundrel*. * * * Some will say, what will become of the Republican party if we all go over to the Readjusters? There is nothing in the name except the smell. * * * My office looks Africa because I have so many colored people in it." Quoted from the *Richmond Dispatch* by C. C. Pearson, *The Readjuster Movement in Virginia*, p. 155.

⁵¹The *Richmond Dispatch*, October 23, November 4, 1883.

were unbearable. The riot, which occurred a few days before the election, followed an accidental discharge of a pistol during a dispute between a white man and two negroes. A crowd gathered but dispersed after several people had been killed.⁵² The Governor sent the militia to restore order, but before it could arrive the whites had the situation in hand. News of the riot and the conditions back of it spread rapidly over the State and united the whites against Mahone as nothing else could have done.⁵³ Similar conditions had prevailed in other localities of the black belt, and other riots were narrowly averted.

The returns of the elections in November (1883) showed a complete victory for the forces opposed to Mahone. The newly elected Assembly contained a Democratic majority of about two-thirds in each house. And contested elections, together with the resignation of several Readjusters, soon brought the Democratic majority to over two-thirds in both houses of the legislature. There were only a few negroes elected, most of them from the Fourth Congressional District.⁵⁴

⁵²The *Richmond Dispatch*, November 4, 1883.

⁵³W. L. Royall, *Some Reminiscences*. The *New York Tribune*, the *Cincinnati Commercial Gazette*, and other Republican papers, accused the whites of the State of conspiring to massacre the colored people of Danville in order to intimidate them throughout the State before the election. The Republicans even went so far as to have the affair investigated by a committee of the United States Senate. The accusation was groundless. The *Richmond Dispatch*; John Goode, *Recollections*, p. 119.

⁵⁴The Fourth district was in the center of the black belt and was solidly Republican in representation on that account. The names of the counties of the district, their voting populations and colored representatives were as follows:

County	Delegate (Negro)	White voters	Negro voters
Dinwiddie (including the city Petersburg)	A. W. Harris A. Green (Petersburg)	3,526	3,741
Brunswick		1,396	1,924
Mecklenburg	A. A. Dobson	1,912	2,922
Lunenburg		1,085	1,222
Nottoway	Archer Scott	759	1,471
Amelia	Archer Scott	785	1,425
Greenesville		692	1,165
Prince Edward	N. M. Griggs	1,180	1,972
Charlotte		1,398	2,055
Powhatan		707	1,007
Cumberland	Philip S. Bolling	756	1,426

The above figures were taken from the *Richmond Dispatch*, October 30, 1883.

The acts of the General Assembly of 1883-1884 show the effects of the compromise between the Funder and Readjuster elements in the Democratic party. The debt question was declared to be settled. Hugh McCulloch, who was well acquainted with the situation in Virginia, said after the Readjuster period had ended, "Had it not been for the colored votes, the ante-war debt of Virginia would long since have been settled in a manner satisfactory both to the taxpayers and the holders of her bonds, and the credit of the State freed from the stain of repudiation, which now (November, 1887) rests upon it."⁵⁵

The liberal acts passed by the previous legislature concerning the suffrage, taxation, appropriations for public schools, and others of like nature, were kept on the statute books; and the liberal program in regard to the public institutions was enlarged. But those acts which were the products of Mahoneism were changed, and the whole political machinery built up by Mahone, was at once attacked. Among the first resolutions introduced into the Senate on the first day of the session was one by Senator Newberry asking that Mahone resign from the United States Senate. It was charged that he had betrayed his party in order to get control of the Federal patronage in Virginia; that he had absented himself from his duties in Washington for about five months in order to control the legislature for his own selfish ends; that he had tried persistently to prejudice the people of other states against those whom he represented; and that he had not ceased to "array class against class and race against race, and to influence the passions and prejudices of one against the other by the most palpable misrepresentations and unparalleled vituperation." The resolution was passed in both houses of the Assembly.⁵⁶

The undoing of Mahoneism by the legislature was complete. The Readjuster Governor's power of appointment was greatly curtailed in such a way as to give the legislature

⁵⁵Hugh McCulloch, *Men and Measures of Half a Century*, New York, 1889. p. 514.

⁵⁶House and Senate Journals, 1883-1884.

the opportunity of depriving Mahone's appointees of office. There was also further centralization of the appointing power in the legislature. Thus a great many petty officers throughout the State, who had been active agents for Mahone, were removed. Provision was made for keeping local school officials from engaging in politics. The Readjusters, especially under Mahone's rule, had found them very useful as local agents for the party. The charters of the cities with large colored populations were amended so as to prevent negro-Radical domination in their affairs such as had existed in Danville after Mahone's party had changed its form of government. Congressional districts were reapportioned in favor of the Democratic party; but gerrymandering was not as obvious in this as in the former redistricting under Mahone's supervision. Investigations were made by the Assembly into every phase of the state government that had been affected by Mahoneism, and much incompetence, fraud, and evil political practices, were brought to light. The work of the legislature was thorough and drastic; but the evil which was undone and the superior character of the new local and state officials amply justified these measures.

In April, 1884, the Coalitionist State Convention (as the Mahone State convention was called) met under General Mahone's leadership, drew up a platform and instructed its delegates to the National Republican convention to support Arthur for president, and adopted the name "Republican" for the first time. Mahone again posed as the black man's friend. He conducted his campaign with his usual vigor, but the Democrats carried the State for Cleveland and elected eight out of the ten Congressmen. Eighty-five per cent of the total vote was cast in the election. The total Democratic vote for President in the State was 145,497; the total Republican vote, 139,356.

In the elections of 1885, there were to be chosen members of the General Assembly and the Governor. Mahone again made a desperate effort to win the State. As a compromise with



FITZHUGH LEE
Governor 1886-1890

those who leaned towards the straight-out Republicans, John S. Wise was nominated for Governor by his party. The Democrats nominated General Fitzhugh Lee. The removal by President Cleveland of Republican postmasters and revenue officers, who had been very active in politics throughout the State, during the summer of 1885, further weakened Mahone's organization. And the Democratic organization under the capable management of Mr. Barbour was rapidly increasing in efficiency. The campaign was a hard one on both sides. National interest was felt in it because of the notorious record of General Mahone in both state and national politics, and the knowledge that his defeat meant the loss by the Republicans of two men in the United States Senate, and of a state out of the solid Republican South. For the first time in twenty years, prominent Northern Republicans came to Virginia to speak in behalf of their party candidates. Most prominent of these were Foraker and John Sherman. Although these men made "mild and soothing" speeches in Virginia, it was known that they had "waved the bloody shirt" at home. Their presence, therefore, aided the Democrats more than it hurt them.⁵⁷

The Democrats were again victorious. Accusations of fraud were made by both parties, and doubtless there was occasion for them, but the heavy vote cast by the Republican party,

⁵⁷While Sherman was speaking in Virginia, the following headlines appeared in his own paper in Ohio, the *Cincinnati Commercial Gazette*:

"Desperate Doings—Smacking of the Murderous Old Danville Methods—Inaugurated as the Last Hope of Virginian Bourbons—Republican Meetings Broken Up at Various Places, While Their Leaders Are Brutally Assaulted—Democracy's Scandalous Treatment of Sherman and Villification of Foraker." Quoted in *Richmond Dispatch* November 3, 1885. See similar articles quoted from the *New York Evening Post* and the *New York Tribune*. On the other hand, the *Washington Post* took the following view of the situation: "There is but one issue to be decided tomorrow in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and that is designated most fitly by the word 'Mahoneism.' Can Mahone with 120,000 negroes at his back reinforce his failing columns with a sufficient number of white men to perpetuate for an indefinite number of years his rule as a free-booter and a pirate over the people of his own state?"

The *Nation* shared the opinion of the *Post* as to Mahone's character and purpose.

which was composed largely of negroes, shows that there was no foundation to the Republican report that there was widespread "bulldozing" by the Democrats in the election.⁵⁸ "The Democrats," said a telegram from Mahone on hearing the election returns, "have carried the State and legislative tickets by unscrupulous use of election machinery, over which they have absolute control, and which was provided by their past usurping legislature with this end in view." The *Richmond Dispatch* in denying this accusation, said, "What a characteristic effort to poison the mind of the Northern public! 'Unscrupulous' forsooth! Indeed, does that word come with poor grace from the leader of the party that has flooded the State with bogus ballots."⁵⁹

Although the negroes had voted without hindrance in this election, it was, at this time, that the people of Virginia resolved to eliminate them from politics regardless of any means short of violence. They were tired of the danger and friction which their presence in governmental affairs caused.

The first phase of the Readjuster movement was centered about the settlement of the state debt. It was able to succeed because many people, among whom were able and honest men like Colonel Frank G. Ruffin, W. C. Pendleton, and others, believed that the life of the Commonwealth depended upon the "readjustment" of the state debt. Arguments were found and accepted by them to square the debt settlement with their consciences. The second phase, Mahoneism, was more important in Virginia history from a political point of view. It centered about Mahone, and left its traces on the political life of the Commonwealth for years to come. The methods introduced by Mahone to place himself in power were adopted by his opponents as the only means to defeat him, and men's consciences became more or less accustomed to such political methods. The Readjuster movement contributes a painful

⁵⁸The vote for Lee was 152,544; and for Wise, 136,519. Note the *Richmond Dispatch*, November 16, 1885.

⁵⁹The *Richmond Dispatch*, November 4, 1885.

chapter to Virginia history. It left only shame and a lowered political morality. The next fifteen years were marked by an increase of race friction, and the increased use of these loose political methods. It was to remedy this unhealthy state of affairs and to leave neither cause nor excuse for fraud in politics, that changes were finally made in the fundamental laws of Virginia. Furthermore, this new alliance of the Republican party with what was disreputable in Virginia politics has been a strong factor in keeping the State almost solidly Democratic.

In 1892, ten years after the Riddleberger bill became a law, the debt question was still unsettled. Largely on account of the continual political agitation of this question, funding under the McCulloch act, and later under the Riddleberger act, soon ceased. The bondholders continued to press their tax receivable coupons for payment. Under the able leadership of William L. Royall, the State was continually being "dragged before the courts of the Commonwealth and the inferior and supreme courts of the United States." She was subjected to harsh criticism; her integrity was questioned; her credit was ruined; and her progress was impaired. In 1885, and again in 1887, the legislature of Virginia enacted ingenious statutes which effectively blocked the payment of coupons for taxes. Some of this legislation was declared unconstitutional by the Federal Supreme Court. But enough escaped the hands of the Supreme Court to enable the State to accomplish its purpose. The fight continued with bitterness, and suit after suit tested the validity of the anti-coupon laws. At one time, the Attorney General of Virginia was summoned before the United States Circuit Court for violating an injunction, fined five hundred dollars, and committed to jail until the fine should be paid. He applied to the Supreme Court for a writ of *habeas corpus*, and was discharged from custody. In like manner, Mr. Royall, the bondholders' attorney, was brought by the same Attorney General before the state courts for intimidating the grand juries and was fined one hundred and fifty dollars, committed

to jail until the fine should be paid, and was released by the Federal Court. Finally, the Supreme Court in rendering a decision in regard to one of the cases brought before it in 1890 (135 U. S., 662, *McGahey v. Virginia*) declared:

“It is certainly to be wished that some arrangement may be adopted which will be satisfactory to all parties concerned and relieve the courts as well as the Commonwealth of Virginia, whose name and history recall so many interesting associations, from all further exhibition of a controversy that has become a vexation and a regret.”⁶⁰

Acting upon this advice, both the bondholders and the state appointed a commission to bring about a settlement. During the summer and fall of 1891, these commissioners, after much discussion, arrived at a compromise known as the “Olcott settlement” from the chairman of the bondholders’ commission, Mr. F. P. Olcott. By this settlement, adopted in an Act dated February 20, 1892, the principal of the debt was materially increased, while the interest rate was further lowered. The State was authorized to issue new bonds maturing in one hundred years from July 1, 1891, to the amount of \$19,000,000 in exchange for the \$28,000,000 of debt which had not been funded. These new bonds should bear interest at two per cent for the first ten years, and three per cent for ninety years. The total principal of the debt (exclusive of bonds held by the colleges) was placed at \$25,081,242.50, an increase of about three and one-third million dollars over the amount named in the Riddleberger Bill of 1882. This settlement was accepted by both sides as satisfactory and final. Since it was made with the consent of the creditors, and effected a reasonable compromise, the stain of repudiation was removed from the good name of Virginia.

At last, after a quarter of a century of bitter struggle, Virginia had come to a satisfactory agreement with her bondholders. She did not feel, however, that her duty to them

⁶⁰William L. Royall. *History of the Virginia Debt Controversy*, Richmond, 1897.

would be fulfilled until West Virginia had been induced to pay to them her share of the ante-bellum debt. Soon after Virginia had ended the fight with her creditors, therefore, she became their champion in a long battle in the courts with her daughter, West Virginia.⁶¹

⁶¹See chapter XIII.

CHAPTER X

THE FOUNDATION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM IN VIRGINIA

There is no public enterprise in Virginia which is closer to the homes or to the hearts of her people than the state-wide public free school system. Yet it is comparatively modern, and was adopted by the State with no small degree of misgiving on the part of many of her citizens. The idea, however, was not new to the people, and several attempts were made by the Commonwealth before 1860 to introduce the system. The Virginia Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge, which was submitted to the legislature on June 18, 1779, was "the first American proposal for a modern state school system."¹ This bill was drawn up by Jefferson, when he met Wythe and Pendleton in Williamsburg, in 1779, to revise the laws of Virginia.

It provided for the division of each county into school wards. In each ward, the citizens should meet and build a school house at a point convenient to all. Here their children would come to be taught without having to pay tuition. The State should be divided into larger districts, each with an academy (or high school) supported jointly by the counties of that district. The most promising boy of each elementary school should have his expenses paid at the nearest academy, and twenty of the brightest youths throughout the State should be sent to William and Mary, which should be made a university and the head of the whole public school system.

¹W. A. Maddox, *The Free School Idea in Virginia Before the Civil War*. Teachers' College, Columbia University, *Contributions to Education* No. 93, N. Y. 1918, p. 12.

The bill was received with enthusiasm; but lack of funds during and immediately following the Revolution delayed action thereon until 1796. At this time the bill was passed; but a feature was introduced which made it inoperative from the beginning. The legislature "left it to the court of each county to determine for itself, when the act should be carried into execution, within their county." The court was made up of the justices of the county. Since it was provided that the expenses of these schools should be borne by the inhabitants of the county, everyone in proportion to his general tax rate, the justices, who were generally of the more wealthy class, which paid most of the taxes, were unwilling to assume the burden of educating other people's children. But public opinion would have forced the hands of the justices had there not been other and more potent obstacles in the way. The plantation system tended to make each planter's home a self-sustaining community. This economic self-reliance produced a corresponding political self-reliance. Aside from its function of protecting the people and their property, the state government touched the lives of the people along very few lines until about the beginning of the twentieth century. The difficulty of bringing children together in thinly settled districts, in which the roads were almost impassable in winter, was alone sufficient to prevent a proper system of public schools. There was no means of bringing together for common action the various elements in the community. Private schools, many of which were already established, complicated the problem. Finally, sectional and political differences and friction hindered effective legislation along this and other lines. Some of these obstacles remained even after Virginia became more thickly settled; and they impede progress even today.

By act of February 2, 1810, Virginia created a Literary Fund for the promotion of learning.² In 1811 the General

²Tennessee was the first and Virginia was the second state in the South, and the fifth in the Union, to establish a permanent public school fund. (Knight,

Assembly set aside the income from the fund to provide schools for the poor throughout the State. The next year after its creation, a board was created to invest the income of the fund and to superintend the expenditure of the interest as directed by the General Assembly. The first appropriation from the interest of the fund was made in 1818. Forty-five thousand dollars was to be given annually to elementary education and \$15,000 to the University of Virginia, which was to be created. The latter appropriation remained the same until 1861. As the revenues from funds increased, however, the appropriation for schools increased. The Constitution of 1851 was the first to recognize free schools. It provided for the application of one-half of the capitation taxes collected by the State to primary and free schools. Two years later, all the capitation taxes were given for this purpose.

While the Literary Fund was developing in size and usefulness, attempts were made to strengthen the free school system. In 1817, Charles F. Mercer brought forward in the legislature a General Education Bill, which provided for a board of public instruction, and for the division of the State into townships, with trustees elected by the county courts. All white children should have free tuition. The bill was passed by a good majority in the lower house, but the vote tied in the upper house, and the speaker cast his vote in the negative. Had this bill become a law, the State would have had a good basis upon which to develop a real free school system. Instead of this, the law enacted in 1818 provided for a system of schools for the poor. An act of 1829 removed the distinction between rich and poor, but it made the adoption optional with the counties. It also left to the discretion of each county the tax rate to support the schools. Furthermore, the system was not suited to a sparsely settled region. It was

Public Education in the South, p. 167.) The act was the work of James Barbour, governor of Virginia during the War of 1812, some time United States Senator and minister to Great Britain. Shortly before his death, he requested that his epitaph should be "Here lies James Barbour, originator of the Literary Fund of Virginia."

a failure. It was at this time that the Second Auditor was made "superintendent" of the Literary Fund, and was given general supervision of the school system.

In 1840, the Federal census for the first time recorded the number of illiterates. It revealed 58,732 men and women in Virginia (including what is now West Virginia) who could not read and write. Dr. Henry Ruffner placed the number at 75,000 to 100,000. A citizen of the State, living at that time, wrote that "the discovery of so appalling and melancholy a fact awakened universal astonishment and alarm. Public meetings were held; patriotic addresses delivered; educational conventions called; and educational associations formed. Successive governors, particularly Governor McDowell, repeatedly and eloquently invoked the attention of the legislature to the subject; distinguished members in both houses of that body evinced a laudable zeal in the cause; the public press lent all its power to further their efforts, wisely merging all party distinctions in a united advocacy of the common interest; and, thus, many hopeful manifestations were exhibited throughout the State, of the immediate adoption of some general and efficient system of popular instruction."³ Among the more noted educational bodies which might be mentioned were the Richmond Educational Convention of December 9 and 10, 1845, presided over by Governor James McDowell, at which there were 200 delegates, and the Lexington Convention of 1841, at which Henry Ruffner, father of William H. Ruffner, presented his scheme for a public school system, which may have been the foundation of our present school system. This agitation resulted in the law of 1846 which provided for primary free schools. The system, however, was not state-wide. Its establishment in each county required the assent of two-thirds of

³John Howard, *An Address on Popular Education in Virginia, in Connection With the Proposed Changes in the Organic Law*, delivered July 13, 1850, at the Annual Commencement of Richmond College, Richmond, 1850, p. 5. John Howard was a prominent Richmond lawyer.

the voters. Three counties were by special enactment permitted to introduce schools by consent of a majority of the electors. The schools in general were supported by the respective counties which adopted the system, and were aided by the income from the Literary Fund.

The income from the Literary Fund was distributed to the counties according to the population. It was used for the most part for the instruction of indigent children. The entire control of its expenditure in the counties was placed in the hands of local commissioners. These commissioners were chosen by the justices of the peace who formed the county court in each county. Each large community had its commissioner, whose duty it was to locate the indigent children and provide them with a teacher. If no teacher could be found to teach them in a separate school, he would make an agreement with a teacher of a pay school to instruct these students for a small sum to be appropriated from the funds in the hands of the commissioner.

There were many reasons why the system did not work. Sometimes the commissioners neglected their duty. It was difficult to secure suitable teachers with the meager salaries which were offered for the work; but the greatest obstacle to the "pauper system," as it was called, was that people did not like to be put into a separate class as "poor." We may agree with an early governor of Georgia that, "Poverty, though a great inconvenience, is no crime." But it was asking too much of human nature to expect the self reliant and self respecting farmer or laborer who could not afford to employ a teacher for his children, to allow himself and his family to be labeled as "poor," "pauper," or "indigent."

The fact that public free education and charity were so closely related (even when free schools for all classes could be established) caused their association to become almost inseparable in the minds of the people, and created a prejudice against public schools which was most difficult to overcome.

In an address before the literary societies of Washington



WILLIAM H. RUFFNER

College in June, 1850, the Virginia poet, John R. Thompson, said, "Humiliating to our state pride as may be the confession, it must be admitted that Virginia has done little as yet in the cause of public instruction. I know no more painful reading in the whole range of documentary publication, to an educated Virginian, than the Report of the Second Auditor on the state of the Literary Fund, with the accompanying proceedings of the school commissioners throughout the commonwealth."⁴

At that time, the people of the State were looking forward with much interest to the Reform Convention, which was soon to meet and draw up a new constitution. They realized that this convention would introduce universal white male suffrage. There was a feeling of misgiving in the minds of many of the more conservative as to trusting the ballot, with its power over taxation, in the hands of those who had no property. There was but one safeguard: "Universal suffrage can cease to be dangerous to property, only when the multitude cease to be ignorant. *Educate the people and trust them*, is the true philosophy. Knowledge is power, because it is prosperity and protection, the common support and shield and armament of all."

These words, spoken by a Virginian at this time, expressed⁵ the truth which Jefferson, Madison, Washington, and other founders of the Commonwealth, had realized at the beginning. The increasing political difficulties in national affairs made it more than ever necessary that the people be trained to choose able leaders. The introduction of manhood suffrage not only made public education a necessity but assured its introduction. The free school idea championed by such men as Henry Ruffner, John Holt Rice, John R. Thompson, Henry A. Wise, John B. Minor, and a host of other great leaders, had made, and was making, itself felt

⁴John R. Thompson, *Education and Literature in Virginia*, an address, etc. Richmond, 1850. See also John Howard, *An Address on Popular Education*, etc.

⁵John Howard, *Address on Popular Education*.

throughout the old Commonwealth. No plan had been adopted which suited conditions in Virginia, but the adoption of a suitable one could not have been much longer delayed.

The Second Auditor's report for 1860 shows the progress that had been made in educating "poor" children throughout the State, and in developing county and city free schools. According to this report, "The number of poor children sent to school in 106 counties and two towns in the year 1860 was 50,199; the average attendance of each poor child was fifteen scholastic weeks, at an average cost each of \$3.90; the total amount expended for tuition, including books, compensation of officers, and all other expenses, in 130 counties and three towns, was \$195,738.37." Eighty-one counties reported a total of 3,197 schools. The Literary Fund at this time amounted to \$1,877,364.68.

This was a summary of the expenditure made from state funds in what is now the two Virginias. The most encouraging feature of the report was the account of the "district free schools" which had been established under the Act of 1846 for the education of all classes. These were in operation in nine counties and four towns. The counties of Elizabeth City, King George, Northampton, Norfolk, Princess Anne, and Washington, within the present limits of Virginia, and Jefferson, Kanawha, and Ohio, in the modern West Virginia, and in the towns, Fredericksburg, Norfolk, and Portsmouth in old Virginia, and in Wheeling, now in West Virginia. Since these "district free schools" of the counties would, without doubt, soon have grown into a state system, had not war and Reconstruction intervened, it will be well to see what they were accomplishing at the beginning of the war.

The school commissioners of Elizabeth City County reported that schools existed in each of the twelve districts. The children were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, English grammar, and geography, which were the subjects usually taught in the schools. In spite of the difficulties resulting from the fact that the county was very sparsely settled, the

schools were showing progress, and it was "a source of pride and pleasure" to see school advantages extended to those who would not otherwise receive them. The teachers were paid twenty-five dollars a month⁶ in Northampton County, the schools were in operation throughout the entire year.⁷ The report from Princess Anne states that the schools were accomplishing much good. In some districts, the patrons supplemented the teachers' salaries in order that "some of the higher branches of an English education" could be taught.⁸ In Washington County there were forty-eight district free schools.⁹ "The schools," said the report, "are well conducted; the children progress in learning as fast as could be expected, and the poor children make as much progress in learning as the others. No person is employed as a teacher without being examined as to qualifications and moral character, and certified in the manner prescribed by law." There was no report from Fredericksburg. The Norfolk superintendent wrote, "I am satisfied there is not an institution in the State more worthy of public confidence and admiration." There were 556 pupils in the Portsmouth schools.¹⁰ Encouraging reports also came from western Virginia.¹¹

Public school systems were already well established in the chief cities of Virginia, when the state-wide system was founded in 1871. Norfolk took the lead when she set up a system of free schools by an ordinance of the city council in 1850. A poll tax of \$4 was levied for the maintenance of the schools. By 1870, colored schools had already been

⁶Of the 846 white children from six to twelve years old, 269 were attending schools. The Literary Fund contributed \$509.93, and the county \$2,398.72.

⁷There were 550 pupils. The Literary Fund contributed \$710.97, and the county, \$4,970.78. There was no report from Norfolk County.

⁸There were 873 children from six to sixteen years. They attended 69,886 days.

⁹The term of seven of these was twelve months; of nine, nine months; of twenty-three, six months; and of nine, less than six months.

¹⁰The schools received \$1,395.52 from the Literary Fund, and \$5,621.04 from the city.

¹¹For the second Auditor's Report mentioned above see *Annual Reports and other Documents of the House of Delegates*, 1861-62. Document No. 7.

established under the management of a board of two white and two colored commissioners and a colored superintendent. In 1871, they were placed under the same administration as the white schools. At that time, there were sixteen teachers and 865 pupils, white and colored, in the schools; \$11,472.76 had been expended for school purposes; and Superintendent W. W. Lamb, ex-mayor of the city, had been sent by the school board to study school methods and administration in other cities.

Petersburg was the second city to adopt a school system before the war. This district system was changed to a "general system" in 1868 when Dr. Barnas Sears, agent of the Peabody Fund, offered to give the city \$2,000 provided that it would raise about \$20,000 for establishing a general system of public schools for both races. The city council accepted the offer, and before the end of the year the system had been inaugurated with an enrollment of about 1,500 pupils. Times were hard and sectional feeling intense. But liberal arrangements were made by the president of the newly appointed school board with New York publishers for books; and "second-hand school desks and seats, nearly as good as new, sufficient for the accommodation of 200 pupils, were purchased of the City of Boston at one-third their original cost, and in addition five good desks and tables for teachers were presented to the schools."¹² Such was the humble beginning of the present efficient system of schools in Petersburg. The enrollment had increased the next year to 2,661 pupils.¹³

The city council of Richmond inaugurated its present system of schools in April, 1869, in response to an appeal from "a large number of citizens without distinction of party." A school board was appointed, and \$15,000 appropriated for schools. An equal amount was contributed by "northern edu-

¹²*Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (of Virginia)*, 1871, p. 18. This report tells of these beginnings in the city systems.

¹³In 1871 the schools were placed under state control, and S. H. Owens was appointed city superintendent.

cational societies, the Freedmen's Bureau, and Dr. Sears, the agent of the Peabody Fund.¹⁴ The enrollment for the first session, that of 1869-1870, was 2,400 pupils. At the close of this session, the city took entire control of both white and colored schools, appropriated \$42,625 for current expenses, and appointed J. H. Binford city superintendent. The council also appropriated \$100,000 in 8 per cent educational bonds for the erection of new school buildings. In addition to the primary and grammar grades, there was an "advanced" grammar, or high school grade, and provision was made for a separate, well equipped high school building. When the city schools became part of the state system in April, 1871, the enrollment had reached 3,300. An efficient school system had been established.

This brief sketch of the public free school movement in Virginia prior to 1870 shows that Virginia was not unlike all the other states of the Union which established public school systems when circumstances allowed. With all due respect to some men who have written able histories of education in the United States, there was no such thing as a Northern and a Southern attitude towards education. Generalizations in such things are convenient and easy to make, but often mislead. Virginia was a rural district, experiencing the same difficulties which all rural districts have experienced in the establishment of public schools. It seems most inconsistent to label and set aside the South as "hostile to education," and "rural districts," in whatever state located, in another group with the same label. The truth of the matter is that before the War for Southern Independence, there was a growing sentiment in favor of public education. North Carolina had taken the lead in introducing a public school system through the splendid efforts of Calvin H. Wiley, who could say in 1860, "The educational system of North Carolina is now attracting the favorable attention of the states south, west, and north of us." In fact, the Georgia legislature had

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 19. A. Washburne, Esq., was appointed superintendent.

actually invited him to come at their expense to aid in perfecting a similar school system for that state.¹⁵

The public school idea was also rapidly materializing in Virginia. In the words of Dr. William Arthur Maddox, "Notwithstanding the failure of the friends of democracy to unite on a common plan of state school government—one of the great reasons for the retardation of the free school idea—Virginia's present organization is not a gift of Reconstruction, but the fulfillment of those county common school experiments which, in 1859, may have been seen in every geographical subdivision of the State."¹⁶

Aid for poor children from the income of the Literary Fund and the provision for all children in the local public free schools were not the only means of gratuitous instruction given in Virginia. There were many privately endowed schools for the poor, and Sunday schools in which rich and poor alike received instruction in elementary school work. And these educational aids were of less importance to the poor than another—the generosity of their more well-to-do neighbors. In the words of a county superintendent in 1885, "There were few families in Southside, Virginia, who did not have, within hornblow of their homes, prosperous neighbors, who cheerfully paid the schooling of children when the parents were unable to do so;" and many instances have been, and are still known, where the aptitude and industry at school and a subsequent most laudable ambition, have made of these beneficiaries "men of intelligence, character, and most useful citizens." This could have been said of other sections of Virginia as well.

Although public district schools and public and private charity brought education to many children in Virginia in

¹⁵R. D. W. Connor, *Ante-Bellum Builders of North Carolina*, in North Carolina State Normal and Industrial College Historical Publications. No. 3, 1914 (published by the college).

¹⁶Maddox, p. 11. See also A. J. Morrison, "Four Revolutions in Virginia Education," in *Texas Review*.

ante-bellum days, the work of these agencies was insignificant in comparison with the work done by the private schools. There were several types of these private schools, many of which survived the war of 1861, and some of which still exist. They were formidable rivals of the public schools, yet they often gave the foundation upon which the public schools were built. They furnished many teachers for the state schools; and in many cases, their buildings were converted into public school houses. In like manner, as we shall see later, the Educational Association and the Educational Journal were founded by teachers of private secondary schools and colleges, and were later adopted and revitalized by public school men and women.

There were several types of private schools—home school, old field school, academy, and seminary. The home school was conducted by a private tutor for a family and was usually patronized by some other families in the neighborhood. It served a temporary purpose, and was therefore usually short lived. There was also the home boarding school in which a teacher who had had a college training, gathered in his home, boarded and taught a limited number of students, and at the same time managed his farm. The “old field” school was a free lance in the educational world. It was often housed in a rude one-room building set down unceremoniously in the middle of a field or vacant lot. Its reputation and often its existence depended upon the efforts of one teacher. Some of the teachers of the old field school attained more than a local reputation for their excellent work. Some were men, who have been happily described by Dr. B. M. Smith as men of iron hand and wooden brain. There are many citizens of Virginia today who relate with pride stories of the warfare which existed between these tyrants of hickory and their incorrigible students. Frequent floggings were expected and received. Since notoriety is more easily acquired than fame, these few masters of the old field school have often been regarded as the typical instructors of that day.

Sometimes an old field school assumed the name if not the dignity of the academy. The academy was a school for boys which was, as a rule, more substantial and permanent than the old field school. It was usually located in a town or village and was often endowed and incorporated. Its instructors were college graduates, well equipped and well paid. There was many a similar institution for girls, which was called, in Virginia, a "seminary." In addition to the usual more solid intellectual fare prescribed for boys, the girls were taught French and music. In both the academy and seminary, the courses of study were limited for the most part to Latin, mathematics, Greek, French, English composition and literature, history, and music. These subjects also furnished the opportunity for instruction in morality and good citizenship. Discipline was strict and instruction was thorough, and the teachers were men and women of culture and refinement. Our colleges are largely the outgrowth of the academies.

There was no official record kept of the number and of the work of these private schools. In a letter to John Adams written in 1814 (July 5), Jefferson speaks of "*petty academies*, as they call themselves, which are starting up in every neighborhood."

In the early '70s, Gen. Francis H. Smith of the Virginia Military Institute, while president of the Educational Association of Virginia, attempted to correct data of the private schools of the State. "We are," he said, "in a great degree, ignorant of the work actually going on and accomplished in the private schools of Virginia."¹⁷ This statement is equally true today, yet we know that in every neighborhood the older inhabitants still tell of these schools, which they or their par-

¹⁷Gen. Francis H. Smith, *The Schools and Schoolmasters of Virginia in the Olden Time*, an address before the Educational Association of Virginia, in Alexandria, July, 1873. Richmond, 1874. He failed to secure sufficient data upon which to submit a report.

ents attended; and in every county and town they can point out buildings or building sites where once flourished academies or seminaries which gave the people of the country as well as of the towns, men and women alike, a broad background of classical culture and refinement. The poverty which followed the war, and the development of the public school system, have made the story of these schools an almost forgotten chapter in history. A few fine examples, however, still survive.

Superintendent Ruffner collected statistics of the private schools, through his county superintendents, three times during the first ten years of his administration. His report of 1872 states that in 1870 there were 25,948 students in private schools (including colleges and technical schools) in Virginia. There were 850 private schools. Of these, there were 187 private academies (or high schools). They employed more than a thousand teachers. The average term of these was eight and one-third months, and of the primary schools, six and three-quarter months. Nine years later, there was a very slight increase in these numbers. During the same period, the number of students in the public schools had increased more than 68 per cent. But the rivalry of the private schools seemed still to trouble Dr. Ruffner, for, in his report of 1880, he said, "It will be observed that there are colored as well as white private schools; which illustrates a principle of human nature seen in everything, namely, that there are people in every community who prefer somewhat exclusive arrangements for their families, and as they pay their private money for this distinction, no one has a right to complain, even if they do not gain any real advantage thereby."

Many students went from the academies to the colleges of the Commonwealth. In 1872, in spite of the poverty of the people, Virginia was sending 986 students to institutions of higher learning within the State or beyond her borders. She had attending college one student to every 772 of her

total white population. A finer record, in this respect, than that of any Commonwealth in the Union.¹⁸

Although Virginia, in 1861, was only beginning her public free secondary schools in a few localities, the idea was rapidly developing. There was much illiteracy, a condition existing at that time in practically every thinly settled region. But the outlook was cheerful. Her state institutions of higher learning were thriving. There were good academies throughout her area. One of the most hopeful features of all was the opportunity provided for the education of women. Although the State provided no such higher institution as the University of Virginia, or the Virginia Military Academy for women, private schools, the seminaries for them, were well established and well attended. The instruction given to the women in these schools would, doubtless, rank higher than that given in the junior colleges of today. In some cases, they were of college rank, and would soon have acquired the standing and reputation of the colleges for men in the country had the war not blighted their growth in 1861. It has been truly stated that "At the opening of the war, Virginia, east of the Alleghany range, led the entire fifteen states of the South in the arrangements for secondary and higher education."¹⁹ In higher education she stood first in the Union.

¹⁸The following table shows these figures for several other states:

Ohio	1 to 1,521	of white population ;	1 to 1,557	of whole population
Connecticut	1 to 1,529	" " "	1 to 1,630	" " "
Massachusetts	1 to 1,588	" " "	1 to 1,615	" " "
New York.....	1 to 1,773	" " "	1 to 1,790	" " "
Pennsylvania	1 to 2,011	" " "	1 to 2,110	" " "
Virginia	1 to 722	" " "	1 to 1,233	" " "

Report of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1873-1874, pp. 12-13.

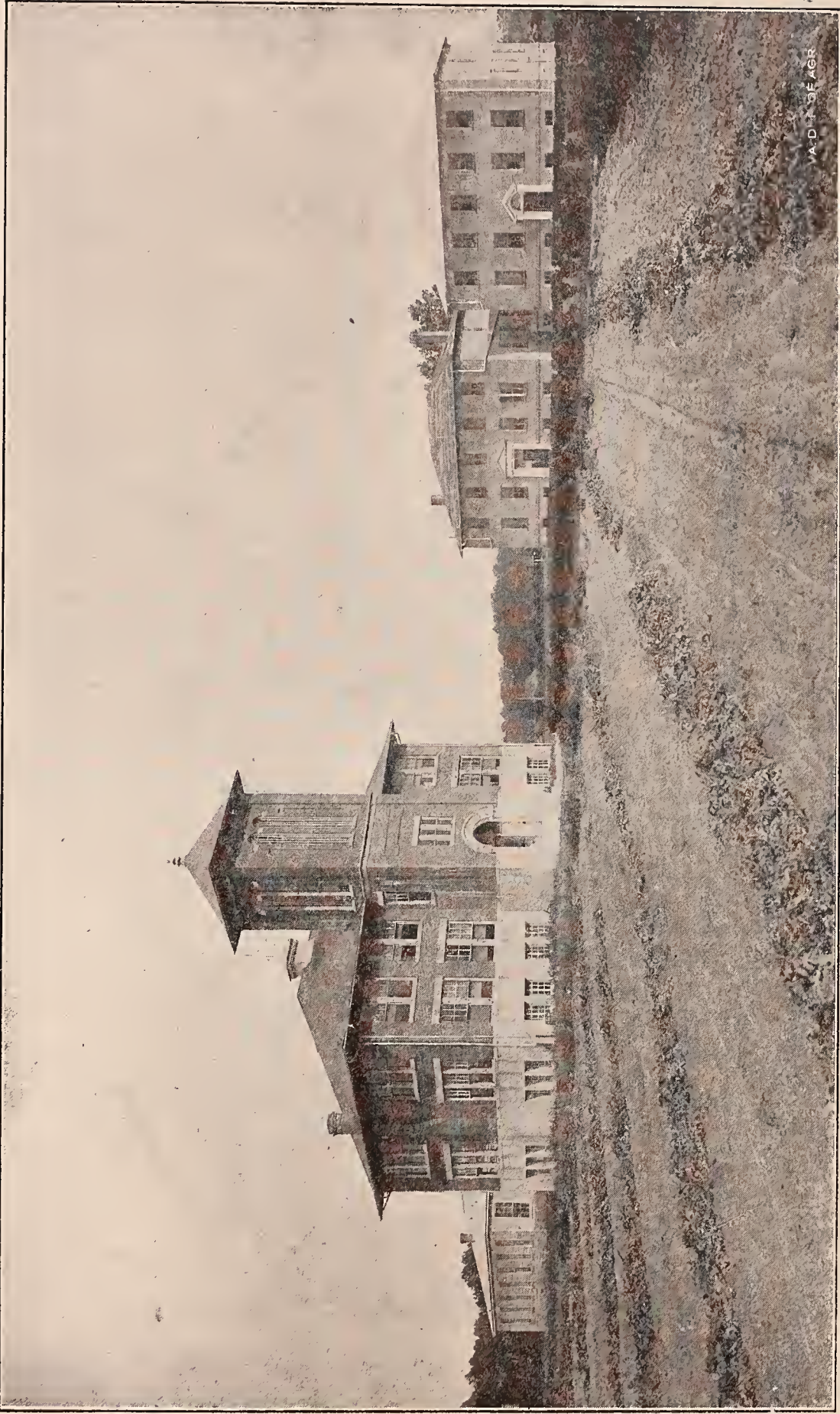
¹⁹Quoted from *United States Educational Report, 1890-1891, p. 882, by A. J. Morrison in Beginning of Public Education in Virginia.*

CHAPTER XI

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM AND THE GROWTH OF HIGHER EDUCATION, 1871-1901

At the beginning of the War of Secession, Virginia was well along the road to the creation of public free schools. The growing density of population, the establishment of a more democratic government, the increasing popular demand for such schools, their successful operation in some localities in the State, and the example of other states, accelerated the movement in that direction. It would be useless to speculate when this goal would have been reached, had war and Reconstruction not come. It is sufficient to repeat that the public school system of Virginia is not a blessed heritage of Reconstruction, but the result of natural development in the State itself. Had Reconstruction brought the public schools, the undoing of Reconstruction would have caused their downfall. A careful study of the history of public education leaves no room to doubt that a large majority of the people of Virginia were favorable to its introduction even though the constitutional provision for a state-wide free school system was a product of the notorious Underwood Convention.

The introduction of public schools would, however, have, doubtless, been delayed had it been left entirely to the choice of a native state government after the war. During the session of the General Assembly of 1866-67, bills were introduced to provide for common schools. A majority of the committee to which they were referred reported that it was "impractical and inexpedient, at the present time, to pass these bills." It is interesting to note that a minority report strongly advo-



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cating their immediate introduction was signed by Francis N. Watkins of Prince Edward and J. McDowell Taylor. The legislature felt too keenly the poverty of the State, and the general political uncertainty, to embark on a new experiment at that time. But in spite of these difficulties, the demands for public schools continued. The representative of the trustees of the Peabody Fund reported to the Convention of 1867-68 that much enthusiasm for free public education had been expressed in a recent meeting of the Educational Association of Virginia. He had been especially impressed by a report of Prof. John B. Minor of the University of Virginia.¹

Those who controlled the destinies of Virginia during Reconstruction did not hesitate to introduce a public school system. They were familiar with its operation in their native Commonwealths. Since they were, for the most part, propertyless transients in the State, they had no fear of increasing the tax burden. They also felt the responsibility of educating the colored people whom they had freed.

The question of free schools came before the Convention of 1867-68 three days after it met. The Radicals both white and colored advocated the early introduction of a public school system. A negro member introduced a resolution giving the "right to every person to enter any college, seminary, or other public institution of learning, as students, [sic] upon equal terms with each other, regardless of race, color, previous condition of loyalty, or disloyalty, freedom or slavery." The question of mixed schools arose continually during the debates on education throughout the session of the Convention and reappeared in the debates on the school law in the General Assembly of 1869-70.

Although the colored members were insistent for such a measure, they were not followed by their white Radical allies.

¹He also stated that state associations of teachers whose meetings he had visited in three southern states had voted for education for all the people and had requested legislation for its promotion. Dr. Barnas Sears, *Education, An Address Delivered to the Constitutional Convention of the State of Virginia, Thursday, January 23, 1868*. Richmond, 1868.

The Conservative members in the convention reflected the fear of Conservatives throughout Virginia that the Convention would unduly mortgage the revenue of the State and would injure its credit. Their anxiety to prevent mixed schools, and to guard the public credit, led them to advocate an assurance of the necessary revenue for the support of free schools before providing definitely for their establishment. The debates in the Convention also show that the Conservatives were loth to assume at this time the burden of negro education. The negro leaders rebuked their white brethren for not advocating "mixed schools," which they had promised the negroes in the Radical convention of April 17, 1867, which met in the African Church. W. A. Hodges warned the white Republicans that but for "de bone, and de sinews, and de muscle, and de skin, which was de colored people, de Rippublican party would hardly be a skeleton." Another negro, Kelso, thought it "very strange that no white Republican had spoken in favor of" mixed schools. In answer to this, a Conservative suggested that the white Radicals would not patronize mixed schools themselves. And when a member from New York stated that he had sent his children to mixed schools for four years, a Conservative member from Virginia immediately inquired whether or not "the gentleman's children were mixed children." Under such unfavorable circumstances, and in the midst of such bitterness, was the article relating to public education (Article VIII) written into the Virginia Constitution of 1869.²

Mr. Willis A. Jenkins, a veteran schoolman of Virginia, states that this article as finally adopted was largely the work of Dr. W. H. Ruffner, aided by Dr. J. L. M. Curry, who "besieged the Underwood Convention" and "by indefatigable labor succeeded in having incorporated in the Virginia Con-

²For a good and convenient account of the introduction of the educational system during this period, see Edgar W. Knight, "Reconstruction and Education in Virginia," *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. XV, pp. 25 and 157.

stitution * * * much that had already been written in the Constitution of New York State.'"³

The Conservatives in the convention were further aided in preventing objectionable clauses by Dr. Barnas Sears, of Massachusetts, the first general agent of the Peabody Fund in the South.⁴

Article VIII provided a simple outline for the school system and specified that it should be introduced before 1876. Time limits were also set for the filling in of this outline through the passage of the necessary laws by the general assembly. It further provided for school districts in each county, under a board of three trustees; a state superintendent of public instruction, elected for a term of four years by the General Assembly; a board of education, with power to appoint division superintendents, high schools, agricultural schools, and normal schools, as soon as practicable; a permanent literary fund; and a tax for financing the schools.

The Legislature which met on October 5, 1869, the first to assemble after Reconstruction, was given the responsibility of creating the system of public instruction provided by the constitution. It was made up of conservative men, who determined to bring about political harmony by fulfilling to the best of their ability the requirements of the new state constitution. It contained a Conservative majority of twenty in the Senate, and more than fifty in the House of Delegates. Of the twenty-seven negro members, three were Conservatives. Governor Walker, a Republican, who had allied himself with the Conservatives, called the attention of the Assembly to the educational provisions of the constitution. The committee on education in the House was composed of eight Conservatives and four Radicals, two of whom were negroes; and

³W. A. Jenkins, *MSS.* W. A. Jenkins, who was one of the pioneer public school educators in the State, has prepared notes on the public school system as he has seen it developed. On account of ill health, he has not published them. It is hoped that they will be edited and published in some form in the near future.

⁴*Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1880.*

that of the Senate consisted of five Conservatives and two Radicals, one of whom was colored.⁵ Although the Assembly entertained serious doubts as to the educational provisions of the constitution they determined "not merely to comply with" the document "as a matter of form, but to make the experiment in good faith."⁶

This Assembly appointed on March 2, William H. Ruffner, D. D., the first state superintendent of public instruction in Virginia. It could hardly have made a more fortunate choice. There were fifteen candidates for the position. Doctor Ruffner, who was named by Gen. Robert E. Lee, was unanimously elected by the General Assembly. William Henry Ruffner, who has been called the "Horace Mann of the South," was born at Lexington, Virginia, February 11, 1824. He was the son of Henry Ruffner, president of Washington College, who, long before the War of Secession, was an opponent of slavery, and one of Virginia's most earnest advocates of public free schools. He graduated from Washington College in 1842. For three years after graduation, he was engaged in business. He then returned to his alma mater and acquired the master's degree. After studying theology at Union Theological Seminary, and at Princeton, he was chaplain at the University of Virginia for a time. From 1851 to 1853, he was pastor of the Seventh Presbyterian Church at Philadelphia. Then ill health, brought about by overwork, forced him to retire to a farm in Virginia.

On March 28, only twenty-three days after he had qualified as superintendent, and five days before the brief interval of thirty days allowed by the constitution, Superintendent Ruffner presented his plan of public instruction to the General Assembly. At the request of the chairman of the committee on schools and colleges in the House of Delegates, he prepared a detailed plan for the school system written in the form of

⁵Edgar W. Knight, *Reconstruction and Education in Virginia*, p. 35.

⁶W. H. Ruffner, *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction*, 1874.



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a bill.⁷ After a few revisions by Prof. John B. Minor, who had been an outspoken advocate of public education for thirty years, the bill was considered in a joint meeting of the Senate and the House committees on April 26. The joint committee reported it without any change to the legislature, and it was printed. It had as its leading advocates in the Assembly two Conservatives. Maj. Henderson M. Bell championed the bill in the House of Delegates. It passed that body by a vote of seventy-one to thirty-three. The debate for the bill was led in the Senate by Col. Edmund Pendleton. Doctor Ruffner sat next to him and aided him in answering his opponents. The Senate approved the measure by the large majority of twenty-three to three. There was no serious opposition in the legislature to its main features. On July 11, 1870, it was signed by Governor Walker and became a law.

The act entitled "An Act to Establish and Maintain a Uniform System of Public Free Schools"⁸ was both rapidly and admirably drawn. Its author did not have to go abroad to find his ideas. For thirty years earlier, his father, Dr. Henry Ruffner, president of Washington College (now Washington and Lee University), had drafted an educational program for the State which outlined a system of public schools almost identical with the one which his son embodied in the Act of 1870. It included, besides free elementary and secondary schools and normal schools, better facilities for educating women, better school architecture, school libraries, and other progressive features, which his son, the first state superintendent, advocated during the whole of his administration. There can be no doubt that Superintendent Ruffner was greatly indebted to his father for his educational program.⁹

A centralized school system was provided which was better

⁷*Senate Journal and Documents*, 1869-70, Doc. No. VI. *Report of Superintendent of Public Instruction*. Doctor Ruffner gives an account of the inauguration of the system in his report of 1871.

⁸*Acts of Assembly*, 1869-1870, Chapter 259 (page 402).

⁹*Journal of the House of Delegates* (Va.), 1841-42, Doc. No. 7.

suited for the needs of the State than the decentralized district system of New England.¹⁰ The administration was in the hands of a state board of education, a state superintendent of public instruction, division superintendent, and district trustees. The state board was composed of the governor, the attorney-general, and the superintendent of public instruction. This board had charge of the investment and distribution of school funds, and was given other powers that had been vested in the board of the Literary Fund. The second auditor, however, continued to be the custodian of the fund. The board had the appointment, with the Senate's consent, of division superintendents and of the trustees; it could make by-laws, hear appeals from superintendents, and had general supervision of the schools. But the chief responsibility of the system was to rest on the shoulders of the state superintendent of public instruction. He was elected for a four-year term by a joint ballot of the General Assembly.

The division superintendents, elected by the board of education, were to receive a salary not exceeding \$350. It was their duty to supervise the schools in the districts, to visit schools, to send reports with statistics to the state superintendent, and to examine teachers with questions prepared by the state board, and to grade and grant certificates to the teachers. The trustees in each school district (which coincided with the township—later magisterial—district) were chosen for terms of three years by the state board. They formed a corporate body in each district. Their duties were to locate and to build the school houses, provide fuel, choose the teachers, furnish books to indigent children, act as a board of review in questions of discipline when appealed to, and to submit to the electors questions of district school taxes. The next year the district trustees were organized into county boards, which were corporate bodies that met annually for business purposes. In 1875, a law was passed which provided

¹⁰F. A. Magruder, Ph. D., *Recent Administration in Virginia*, J. H. U., Studies, XXX, No. 1. Baltimore, 1912, p. 17.

for sub-districts where they should be desired, which gave the patrons within their limits almost complete control over the schools. It was, however, practically a dead letter. Further decentralization was brought about two years later by the creation of county trustee electoral boards composed in each case of the county superintendent of schools, the commonwealth's attorney and the county judge. These boards elected the trustees and served as boards of appeal from them.¹¹

Separate schools were provided for white and colored children. Only the simple, fundamental school subjects—spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, and geography—were allowed except under certain restrictions, since it was felt that the financial condition of the State did not warrant the broadening of the curriculum at that time. For the same reason, high schools and normal schools were not inaugurated at first. The school term should not be less than five months, and a stated average was required for the organization or continuation of a school.

Although provision for public schools had been made on the statute books with creditable promptness, there were many difficulties in the way of making the schools a reality. The first annual reports of the county superintendents to the state superintendent relate the chief difficulties which confronted them. These and others which may be mentioned can be summed up in the two words, *prejudices* and *poverty*. One form of prejudice resulted from inertia. There are always people in a community who oppose any deviation from the trodden paths. Virginia without public schools had been good enough for them. The word "free" offended others. So long had the State maintained free schools for paupers only, that "free schools" to many was synonymous with "pauper schools." Another group, which was large and influential, believed that it was contrary to sound principles of

¹¹When the office of county judge was abolished in 1902 the circuit judge appointed in his place a third non-official member of the trustee electoral board.

government for the State to go into the school business. A few years after the establishment of the school system, Prof. Bennett Puryear, of Richmond College (now University of Richmond), one of the ablest opponents of public schools, while debating with another Richmond College professor, who was one of their most brilliant advocates, argued that the introduction of public free schools would result eventually in State paternalism. He pointed out with convincing logic that free schools would bring compulsory education, and that compulsory education would force the Commonwealth to provide free books, free clothes, and free lunches for its children. Rev. Robert Lewis Dabny, D. D., a professor in Union Theological Seminary, was an able ally of Doctor Puryear. He was one of the most profound theologians of the Presbyterian Church and had acquired additional fame as one of the fighting preachers on Stonewall Jackson's staff, and as a biographer of his great chief. Doctor Dabney also pointed out with great forcefulness the evils of "agrarianism" which would result from the free school system.

The tendency of the dominant party in Congress to meddle in the domestic affairs of the states of the South made increasingly difficult the rebuilding of those states in an orderly and enlightened manner. Dr. Barnas Sears, in his report of October, 1875, to the Peabody Fund, said that, during the previous year, "the subject of public free schools has been more fully discussed in the South than during any previous year. The protracted consideration of the bill contemplating 'mixed schools,' by both houses of Congress, gave occasion to the opponents of popular education to rally their forces and make an assault upon the whole system. The defence by the state superintendents and others had been equally earnest and convincing. No sensible and careful observer supposes for a moment that the public schools in any Southern State will be abolished."

The assault on the public school system in Virginia reached its high water mark in a famous debate conducted through

the medium of the public press in the spring of 1876, the year in which James G. Blaine revived the bitter sectional hatreds in Congress and throughout the country by "waving the bloody shirt." Its participants were eminent Presbyterian preachers—Dr. R. L. Dabney, the leading opponent of public education, and Dr. W. H. Ruffner, the founder of the state public school system, and its greatest champion. The debate began in April, 1876, with a series of articles by Doctor Dabney against free schools, in the *Planter and Farmer*. Doctor Ruffner answered with four articles in the *Richmond Dispatch* and in the *Richmond Enquirer*. Doctor Dabney in turn answered with four more articles in the same two papers. Ruffner then responded in a series of seven articles in the *Enquirer*.

During the course of the debate, Dabney spoke of the state school system as a "craze" and as a "Yankee invention." Ruffner answered that "the Yankees have sought out many inventions, but they didn't invent public schools," and gave facts to prove his statement. Dabney even went so far as to assert, "If our civilization is to continue, there must be a class who must work and not read" (referring of course to the "hewers of wood and the drawers of water"), and he proceeded to paint a gloomy picture of increasing race hatred and strife which would only be terminated by Federal bayonets. Ruffner, who championed the education of negroes, replied, "We should not be insensible to the *moral* claims these people have as human beings upon their fellow-men. The negro, like every other organism, higher and lower, is improvable under culture. He may be made more intelligent, more moral, more industrious, and more skillful. He may be taught much of his civic and social duty. And just in proportion as he is really improved, in that proportion is he a more orderly and productive member of society."

In answer to Dabney's argument that public education would "only prepare the way for that abhorred fate, amalgamation," Ruffner replied that public schools would "foster

among the negroes the pride of race which will have a purifying and stimulating power, and will gradually overcome that contemptible ambition to associate with white people, which has been instilled into their minds by the blundering policy of the Northern people and the Federal Government. We find negroes in our churches, our theatres, our courthouses, our rail-cars, our halls of legislation; but there is one place where no negro enters, and that is a *white public schoolhouse*. The law separates the races in education, and in nothing else."

To Dabney's argument that the children in the public schools would not receive religious training, Ruffner replied that they were not receiving such instruction in the old field schools. The superintendent then showed that, where popular education had been introduced, crime had fled before knowledge. Dabney now brought forward social objections to public schools. "There must be," he said, "a mixture of the children of the decent and the children of the vile in the same society. * * * They must be daily brought into personal contact with the cutaneous and other diseases, the vermin, the obscenity, the groveling sentiments, and violences of the *gamins*."

Ruffner answered that such conditions would not be allowed in a properly regulated school system.

Dabney's most practical appeal was to poverty. The State was still too poor and too heavily indebted to carry an expensive school system. Ruffner argued that the State would make no better pecuniary investment than the improvement of the minds and the earning power of her citizens.

Fortunately for Virginia, there were very few influential men opposed to her new school system. "Indeed," said Doctor Ruffner, "in all my reading, I have met with but two names since the days of Governor Berkeley recorded in opposition to universal education—R. L. Dabney and B. Puryear."¹²

Debates on the public school system lasted for several years. There are Virginians with the prospect of many years

¹²*Circulars* of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, No. 221, p. 43.

of active service ahead of them who can remember these debates, which they read in the newspapers, or heard in their homes, at political gatherings, around the country stores, and on street corners. The question, "Resolved, that public schools should be abolished," furnished the youth in schools and colleges the subject for many a forensic battle. But the schools, like those modern subjects of debate, "trusts" and the "gold standard," had come to stay. Unlike these subjects, however, the public schools were never in serious danger of losing the support of public opinion in Virginia. The negative always had the better side of the argument. The annual reports of the division superintendents show that prejudice against the schools rapidly died out.

There is a tendency among some to ascribe the opposition to the public school system to the prejudice of the "aristocracy." This belief, doubtless, originated as propaganda of the Readjustors, who accused their opponents, whom they styled the "Bourbons," of opposing that democratic institution. Although there were some individuals who were too undemocratic to support public schools, most of those among the well-to-do who opposed them in Virginia did so because they did not wish to be taxed to educate the children of others when they were already employing tutors, or sending their own children to good private schools. I can reach but one conclusion through a close study of this period, and through conversations with those who lived at the time, that is, that the successful introduction of public schools was made possible through the earnest cooperation of all classes in the State, led by the most substantial element—the so-called aristocrats.

The distressing poverty of the people of Virginia after the war made the introduction of public schools a very difficult problem. Many citizens who wanted them felt that the state debt should be paid before the State should incur any new financial responsibility. But the very poverty of the people made irresistible the demand for free schools. The war and

the hard times which followed left most of the people of Virginia without the means of educating their children. Those who had grown from youth into manhood during that unhappy period were determined to give to their children that training of which they themselves had been deprived. After they had come to see with Superintendent Ruffner that "a public school is no more a provision of charity than a town pump," the people of Virginia welcomed the public schools and gave to them their loyal support.¹³

While the people of the State were discussing the merits of public schools, Virginia's first superintendent of public instruction was rapidly building a school system.

Dr. Henry Ruffner had said in his great report to the General Assembly of 1841-42, "The public schools *must be good*. They must be emphatically *colleges for the people*. If they are not good enough for the *rich* they will not be fit for the poor."¹⁴ It was in this spirit that his son, Dr. William H. Ruffner, began his new mission.

The constitution provided for the gradual introduction of public schools "into all the counties of the State by the year 1874, or as much earlier as may be practicable." But they were inaugurated long before the expiration of this time limit.

At the first meeting of the Board of Education on July 29, 1870, twelve county superintendents were chosen. The first of these to "take the field * * * under our new system" was Rev. Benjamin M. Smith, D. D., of Prince Edward County, professor in Union Theological Seminary (then located at Hampden Sidney). Prince Edward's first superintendent had, long before the war, been one of Virginia's most active advocates of public education.¹⁵

¹³I am indebted to Dr. A. S. Priddy, of Charlotte County, as the first to call my attention to the influence of the ex-soldiers, practically all the able bodied men of the State, upon the early acceptance of the public school system.

¹⁴*Journal of the House of Delegates*, 1841-1842, Doc. No. 7.

¹⁵*First Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction*, 1871.

By January 2, 1871, the board had appointed the remaining division superintendents and the district trustees. These 1,400 assistants had been chosen with great care by Superintendent Ruffner, for the success of the infant school system depended upon their effective cooperation. They were all men of standing in their respective communities, conservatives of liberal spirit, who could command the respect of their neighbors. But they had to be enlightened in the needs and methods of public schools. Their leader had inherited from his father a love and knowledge of public education, and was a constant student of the school systems of the United States and of other countries. The Superintendent instructed his numerous assistants in these matters by means of letters, circulars, and the eight pages which he had reserved in the *Educational Journal* for his own official use.

Although there were no public funds available for schools before January 1, 1871, many districts voted to lay a local tax for school purposes. In a number of the counties,—between a fourth and a half,—schools were already opened, or were ready to open, by private subscriptions.

Many of these were originally private schools and had been adopted into the public school system. But the private subscriptions continued to be paid. And in many cases the teachers continued their work as if no changes had occurred. In May, 1871, before the end of the first school year, a vote was taken in each county (Warwick excepted) to decide on the levying of additional local taxes to secure funds for the salary of teachers, and, in some instances, to increase the pay of county superintendents. In seventy-three counties containing an aggregate population of 841,584, the taxes were voted. In twenty-five counties, having a total population of 238,105, the decision was against the additional tax. The opposition in some of these counties was due to the fact that the necessary money for schools had already been provided. In others, there was a reluctance to increase taxes because of some special tax burden that was already being carried.

Only in a very few counties was the defeat of the tax measure due to hostility to public schools. The counties which were opposed to increasing their school taxes were not confined to any definite geographical section.¹⁶

On March 2, 1872, the Superintendent stated that in addition to the "supplementary tax" voted in the seventy-three counties, 372 out of 409 districts had voted a school tax for district purposes. The rate of taxation ranged in the counties from 2½ cents to 25 cents, and in the school districts from half a cent to 50 cents on \$100 worth of property. In addition, ten counties appropriated a poll tax of 50 cents as a whole or in part for school purposes. Local expenses were paid in many districts by private gifts.¹⁷

These facts give further proof that a great majority of the people of Virginia were favorable to public education. They give concrete evidence against the unfortunate idea, which too often exists even among Virginians, that the public schools of the State were an unwelcome blessing to the good people of that time.

In the meanwhile, schools were being rapidly established. As early as December, 1870, they had been opened by private arrangement in about a third of the counties. "Virginia, for the first time," said Doctor Ruffner, "is entering upon a systematic production of the most valuable commodity which can be possessed by a state or offered in the markets of the world—namely, *trained mind*. Nothing else commands so high a price, or produces such large results."

The Constitution of 1869 had provided that "each city and county shall be held accountable for the destruction of school property that may take place within its limits by incendiaries or open violence." This clause was unnecessary, as later events proved.

¹⁶*Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the year ending August 31, 1871 (the first annual report).*

¹⁷*Circulars of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in Virginia State Library, No. 59.*

The early schoolhouses, thus jealously guarded by the constitution, were very primitive in most cases. They represented literally and figuratively the pioneer or log school-house era in the history of our public schools. Of the 3,036 schoolhouses in Virginia at the end of the first school year (August, 1871), 1,725, or over 56 per cent, were made of logs. Only 181 were of brick or stone. About 15 per cent (452) of all the schools were reported unfit for use. Only 190 school buildings were owned by the respective districts.¹⁸

The total value of school property owned by the districts amounted in the beginning to \$211,166. The property not owned was rented or furnished free. The furniture was usually made by local carpenters.

In these schools, there were taught, during the first session, 131,088 pupils. The number had increased to 166,377 during the second year. Of the latter, 119,641 were white and 46,736 were colored. The percentage of the school population (5 to 21 years of age) enrolled increased during these two years from 31.8 to 40.5 per cent. In the first year, however, only 27.8 per cent of the white children of school age, and 16.1 per cent of the colored, were in average daily attendance.

The trustees had great difficulty in securing teachers at the meager salaries which they offered. But poverty once more came to the aid of the public schools. Superintendent Ruffner reported that the "reverses which have befallen so many of our most cultivated people were incidentally converted into blessings to the children of the State, by furnishing a large number of accomplished teachers." More than two-thirds of these teachers in Virginia at that time were men. The average school term was about four and a half months (4.66 months). The subjects taught were elementary in most schools. The first list of text-books adopted by the board included many written by Virginians. Among them

¹⁸*Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of 1871 and 1872.* Seven counties sent no reports in 1871.

were Holmes's speller, reader, and a history of the United States, McGuffey's reader and speller, which had a national reputation even before the War of Secession, Venable's Arithmetic, and Maury's geography.

The public schools were supplemented by the private schools, many of which had survived the war. Of these, there were 165 primary and high schools (academies), ten colleges and twelve "technical" schools. Their average terms were longer than that of the public schools. There were enrolled in the primary and high schools about 16,300 whites and 1,476 colored children. Doctor Ruffner states that the public schools, with few exceptions, were considered as good as, or better than, the old private schools of like grade.

At the end of the second school year, much progress had been made all along the line. In his report of 1872, the Superintendent discussed almost every phase of school work and laid plans for many needed improvements—trained teachers and means of training them, better and more attractive schoolhouses, libraries, better courses of study, more opportunities for the education of women, *et cetera*. This program could not be realized for many years. But a beginning had been made, and Dr. Ruffner could now say with good cause, "We have reason to thank God and take courage."

Courage was needed, for, during the third year, there was a decrease in school attendance from many causes—poverty, epidemic diseases, bad weather, bad roads, and incompetent teachers. The decrease was also due to some extent to an improvement in the school standards. Further discouragement came during the session of 1873-74, when the continued agitation in Congress of the civil rights bill threatened to give the freedmen equal rights with the whites in all schools, hotels, common carriers, churches, and places of amusement. The prospect of mixed schools brought a feeling of distrust for the public school system. Had Congress passed the bill, it would have killed public education in Virginia. Fully one-third of the county superintendents resigned during these three

years—a further evidence of the critical condition of the schools.

While Republican politicians were doing their partisan worst in Congress, nobler spirits in the North were silently undoing their mischief to the public schools. Virginia can never forget her debt to George Peabody and the agents and trustees of the fund which he established to encourage education in the South. Peabody was a native of Massachusetts. He spent the last thirty years of his life in London and had acquired a large fortune. In February, 1867, he gave a million dollars and a large amount of securities for education in the late Confederacy. The income from the fund was to be used to aid in developing common school education. Mr. Peabody added another million dollars and additional securities to the fund in 1869. At that time he came to Virginia to spend the last summer of his life.

The first general agent of the Peabody fund was Dr. Barnas Sears, president of Brown University, and former secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education.¹⁹ Upon his appointment in March, 1867, Dr. Sears made Staunton, Virginia, his home until his death, in July, 1880. During these thirteen years, he was a warm friend and ally of Doctor Ruffner and greatly endeared himself to the people of Virginia. His first service was the aid which he rendered in drafting a suitable constitutional provision for schools in the Constitution of 1869.

Help from the fund was given only to those schools which were willing to raise additional sums, and which would agree to conform to certain standards. In this way, schools were

¹⁹Dr. Sears was born at Sandisfield, Massachusetts, graduated from Brown University in 1825, studied theology at Newton Seminary, preached two years at the First Baptist Church of Hartford, Connecticut, taught languages at Madison University in New York, studied several years in Germany; taught in Newton Theological Seminary; and became its president. From 1848 to 1855, he was secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education. In 1855, he was chosen president of Brown University. Harvard conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity, and Yale, the degree of Doctor of Laws.

developed at numerous points in the South which served as models to their neighbors. The income and the principal were later devoted to the training of teachers.

This period of depression was followed by several years steady growth. In 1874, Governor Kemper became a member of the school board by virtue of his office. Ruffner and Kemper had graduated at Washington College in the same year, and both were speakers at the graduation exercises. Ruffner spoke on "The Power of Knowledge," and Kemper on "The Importance of a Free School System in Virginia." By a happy turn in the wheel of fortune, they were together again—two of the three members of the State Board of Education.

But the skies had no sooner begun to clear than another storm arose. The state debt controversy had already overshadowed the political horizon and soon threatened the very existence of the public schools. Although the constitution had set aside certain funds for school purposes, the officers of the State had diverted them into other channels as the tax-receivable coupons began to undermine the State's revenues. When the subject was brought before the courts, it was held that the payment of sufficient revenue to the schools did not impose upon the Legislature a higher obligation than that of paying interest on the public debt. "The people must be educated, but they must not be educated at the price of repudiation and dishonor. Better would be ignorance than enlightenment purchased at such a fearful price."²⁰

Superintendent Ruffner, who had called attention to this loss in school funds in his report of 1876, worked faithfully to protect the interests of the schools, but to no avail. In 1878, he estimated that the indebtedness to teachers amounted to \$250,000 and that many schools had closed. Governor Holliday, who had been elected on a platform of debt payment, vetoed the 1878 measure, which would have protected the revenue of the school at the expense, if need be, of the bondholder. The State, he said, had no more right than a citizen to educate its children at the expense of its creditors.²¹

²⁰Quoted in Knight, *Reconstruction and Education in Virginia*, p. 165.

²¹*Senate Journal and Documents*, 1877-78. Governor's Message.

In 1879, the number of pupils enrolled, which had already decreased 2,700 during the previous year, fell from 202,244 to 108,074. In some counties every school was closed.²² At this time there were 2,089 white and 415 colored teachers. Their average school term was 5.36 months, and their average salary was \$30.05 for men and \$24.73 for women.

The Superintendent had no complaint of the honesty or faithfulness of the state officials. And he consoled himself with the observation that the decrease of school facilities had caused the people to appreciate their worth more fully. Doctor Ruffner's efforts were finally rewarded by the passage on March 3, 1879, of the Henkel Act, which secured to the schools the revenues set aside for them by the constitution and laws of the State. Subsequent legislation was even more generous. By an act of April 21, 1882, \$400,000 of the money which the State received from the sale of its share of the Atlantic, Mississippi & Ohio Railroad was appropriated to the public schools, to be paid in four equal annual installments. It was stated in the preamble to the act that its purpose was to restore in part the money which had been diverted from the schools. It further stated that "the General Assembly conceives it to be its paramount duty under the constitution" to restore to the schools the remainder of the \$1,544,765.59 which had been diverted from the school funds from 1870 to 1879.²³

During the course of the next few years the public schools were repaid what was due them.

In spite of the improvement in the schools from the material point of view, they were sadly lacking in good teachers. The Superintendent officially records that, in the larger cities of the State, "some really fine teachers may be found," and "sometimes in the smaller places, one meets a true, well

²²The average daily attendance fell from 116,464 to 65,771. *Virginia School Report*, 1879.

²³One thousand dollars received from the sale of the A. M. & O. R. R. was appropriated by the act for the establishment of a colored normal school.

furnished teacher who knows his subjects thoroughly, and has good methods of instruction and discipline * * * But most frequently the sad spectacle of misrule and superficial teaching meets the eye, and, what is worst of all, the teachers' poor performance is often satisfactory to him or herself, to the school board, and to the community."

The teachers, however, were not altogether to blame for this sad state of affairs. The schools were not graded, although Doctor Ruffner was constantly advocating consolidation and grading. Attendance was irregular in many cases and teaching facilities were inadequate. But, worst of all, the teachers themselves had little opportunity to become "well furnished" in their profession. The women had no means in those hard times for attending the colleges or normal schools for their sex outside of Virginia, and such schools were not provided at home. The need of better methods for teaching children, and for giving the teachers a knowledge of them, was early recognized by a large number of leaders in the State. They were much influenced by what was being done along these lines in Europe. A citizen of Lynchburg, as early as 1824, wrote in a local paper, "We hope the time is not far distant when we shall have a State Model School established, to which our citizens may look for an improved and rational system of public instruction."²⁴

In 1840, a memorial from the Rockbridge Agricultural Society, presented by J. D. Ewing, President Henry Ruffner of Washington College, and Superintendent Francis H. Smith of the Virginia Military Institute, suggested to the Legislature the establishment of a state normal school, in which each student should "serve the State as a teacher five years, in consideration of the expense of his education."²⁵ In the meanwhile, Randolph-Macon College had in 1839 made an unsuccessful attempt to inaugurate a department for training teachers. There were other futile attempts to establish nor-

²⁴Maddox, *Free School Idea in Virginia*, p. 121.

²⁵Maddox, p. 122. *House Journal*, 1841-2, Document 53.

mal schools, or normal departments, in order to provide better teachers. The state student plan for the same purpose was more successful. In 1830, Thomas W. Gilmer²⁶ proposed that a number of state students should be exempted from certain fees at the University of Virginia on condition that they should teach, after graduation, a few years in Virginia.²⁶ This suggestion was afterwards adopted there and in other institutions of the Commonwealth. The plan was introduced at the Virginia Military Institute in 1844 by act of legislature. State students were obligated to teach two years in Virginia. General Smith stated in 1868 that, of the 2,390 graduates prior to that date, 390 had been state students.²⁷ In relating the aims of his institution, he places first "to provide competent teachers for the schools of the commonwealth, as a State Normal School."

This brief excursion into the past has been made for the purpose of showing that the teacher-training idea by normal schools and by other means was not new in Virginia prior to the war.

The State Constitution of 1869 had provided for the establishment of normal schools by the board as soon as possible. Provision for them had been made in Dr. Henry Ruffner's plan in 1840, and it was but natural that his son, Dr. W. H. Ruffner, should have strongly advocated them. But the financial condition of Virginia made the founding of normal schools impossible during the decade following Reconstruction. In June, 1867, however, the people of Richmond organized the first Normal School Association of Richmond, with the purpose of establishing a white normal school and continuing it until it could be made a state institution. As a result of its labors, a school was opened in October of the

²⁶Philip Alexander Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia*, 1819-1919. New York, 1920. Vol. II, p. 70.

²⁷Only two of these had failed to teach as required. Report to chairman of Committee on Public Institutions. *Documents of the Constitutional Convention*, 1867-68.

same year. Enrollment was limited to twenty the first year, and to forty the second. Funds were obtained for its maintenance of the city of Richmond, the Peabody fund, and the Soldiers' Memorial Society, of Boston. Mr. Andrew Washburne, of Massachusetts, who subsequently acted as the city superintendent of Richmond, was its administrator. Its life, though brief, was useful. When the schools were organized, Doctor Ruffner was forced to introduce teachers' institutes. They were organized in most of the counties and cities in 1880. In some parts of Virginia, these had developed into summer normal institutes, with sessions from four to six weeks in length. They were, however, only of local interest.

The first attempt to establish a State-wide summer normal school was made by Superintendent Ruffner in 1880, when he obtained permission of the University of Virginia to use its buildings for this purpose, and secured the cooperation of members of its faculty in the work. The chief purpose of the institute was to give real practical instruction along lines which bore directly upon the daily work of the primary teacher. For this work, three public school men were engaged as the regular faculty—Prof. W. M. Newell, principal of the State Normal School of Maryland and state superintendent of schools; Rev. W. B. McGilvray, of Richmond; and Prof. A. L. Funk, of Staunton, then living in Red Cloud, Nebraska; all men of experience and skill in the public school work, and all familiar with the processes of the new education.

An account of the manner in which this first summer normal school was conducted should be of interest.

The school opened at five o'clock in the afternoon of July 14, with the address of Governor Holliday for the Board of Education, followed by Professor Newell, who served as principal. The next morning the regular school exercises began, and were continued day after day successfully, and without intermission to the close. The usual routine was to

assemble the whole body of teachers in the public hall at half past eight in the morning, commence with short devotional exercises, follow with two and sometimes three lectures of forty minutes each on the science and practical methods of school teaching, interspersed with vocal music, calisthenics, and brief recesses. At 12 M. the school was divided into eight sections and marched into as many lecture rooms, to be further instructed and drilled by repeaters who were selected teachers of ability, and in some cases county and city superintendents, and who acted under the supervision, and with the assistance, of the regular instructors. At 5 o'clock P. M. the school was again assembled in the public hall to listen to a lecture from some one of the university professors. This order was partially interrupted by lectures from the superintendent of public instruction.

Although its enrollment was good (there were 312 men and 155 women) and, in the language of Doctor Ruffner, "Satisfaction and even pleasure prevailed among the members,"²⁸ the institute was not continued.

A similar institute for colored teachers was opened at Lynchburg with the cooperation of Supt. E. C. Glass of that city on July 15, 1880.

These institutes were made possible through the aid of the Peabody Fund. Contributions from this fund were later used in maintaining Peabody normal institutes for white and colored teachers in several cities of the State.

The impetus which Doctor Ruffner gave to the training of teachers continued to develop in strength in spite of the fact that the Superintendent himself was swept out of office by the political storm that had gathered, and was forced to

²⁸*Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1880.* This is an interesting report. At this time Doctor Ruffner asked his division superintendents to give histories of the schools before and since the inauguration of the public school system. Many valuable reports were received by Superintendent Ruffner. But he had no funds for publishing them. I have been able to find no trace of them. They would have doubtless been more valuable than Farr's reports of 1885 had they been preserved.

leave the completion of his great work to less able hands. In February, 1879, the Readjuster party was created. Under the leadership of Mahone and Massey, it was an exceedingly active body from the beginning. Since the Funders had been unwilling to repudiate their obligations to the creditors, even though the public schools might suffer, the Readjusters, with some success, attempted to make it appear that their opponents, the "Bourbons," as they called them, were hostile to public free schools. It was false propaganda. While the campaign in the fall, 1879, was in progress, the Superintendent wrote that, "in the furious political canvass which is now going on as I write, each of the three parties in the field is trying to prove that its views, of all those advocated, are the very views, and the only views which will protect the school system from spoliation."

The following statistics of the year 1880²⁹ show the conditions of the schools near the end of Ruffner's administration:

	School population (5 to 21 years)	Pupils enrolled	Percentage of school population enrolled	Average daily attendance	Percentage of school population in average daily attendance
White	314,827	152,136	48.3	89,640	28.5
Colored	240,980	68,600	28.5	38,764	15.3
Total	555,807	220,736		128,404	

Pupils enrolled in private schools

	Pupils over 21 years old	Number studying the higher branches	Primary schools	High schools and colleges	Teachers in private schools	
					Male	Female
White	400	6,627	16,581	5,179	504	1,071
Colored	151	635	4,616	94	64	61
Total.....	551	7,262	21,197	5,273		

²⁹*Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1880.*

Teachers in the public schools

	Male	Female	Total	Average salary		Average months taught
				Male	Female	
White	2,478	1,610	4,088	\$29.20	\$24.65	5.64
Colored.....	531	254	785			

In addition to the original subjects taught in the schools (reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, geography, and grammar), there had been added United States history and often Virginia history. Vocal music, calisthenics, and drawing, were also taught to some extent in the primary schools. In many schools, the patrons supplemented the teachers' salaries in order to have higher subjects taught—geometry and algebra, Latin, French or German, and one or more branches of physical science. There were in 1880, 7,262 pupils studying these subjects as a whole or in part.

The Readjusters captured the General Assembly in 1879 and elected the governor of the State in 1881. Doctor Ruffner was at heart a Funder, but he not only scrupulously avoided politics himself, but also sent a circular letter to his division superintendents urging them to keep party politics out of the schools. Yet as early as 1880 there were signs that the school system would fall a prey to Mahone's machine. "What has all the figuring about the debt and the revenue to do with school teaching anyway!" exclaimed the Superintendent in his report of that year. "To threaten school officers and teachers with the loss of their places because they fancy one scheme rather than another of settling the public debt, is as merciless a tyranny as was ever practiced by the legions of Islam."

But the school system with its many officers and teachers and its well organized machinery, which reached to every district and fireside in the State, was too well adapted to partisan use to be ignored by the Readjusters. Superintendent Ruffner had united all factions and parties in support of the public schools. Politics had played no part in his

policies. It had been the rule of the Board of Education to keep division superintendents in office as long as possible, and Doctor Ruffner could say in 1880, "nearly one-half of our county superintendents have served from the beginning of the school system."

If one should read the list of county and city superintendents of 1880, and then turn to that of 1885, one would find a new group of men. The Readjusters had come into



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possession of the spoils (or the "loot," as the Funders would probably have said). The slaughter of the superintendents began when eighty-four whose terms had expired on July 1, 1881, were considered for reappointment by the legislature in December. Of more than half a hundred who failed to receive the approval of the Senate at this time alone, two score had served with Doctor Ruffner from the inauguration of the first public schools. As others came to the end of their terms, men from the party in power took their places until the work was done. Boards of educational institutions fared likewise.

Doctor Ruffner gave place in 1882 to a Readjuster, R. R. Farr, a veteran twice wounded in the War of Secession, who had served in the legislature since 1870. It is hard to get

a just estimate of Superintendent Farr because of his close association with General Mahone, which cast a shadow over him. He was openly accused of being lacking in education. On the other hand, Willis A. Jenkins writes, "While Mr. Farr was not the great educational leader that his predecessor was, still he put forth much effective effort to promote the public schools, and accomplished much that benefited them." One of the leading Funders, Dr. J. L. M. Curry, wrote in 1885, "In my work as Peabody agent I found no superintendent more devoted to the cause of public schools, more energetic, more faithful, more efficient than Mr. Farr."³⁰ And Doctor Ruffner himself stated in 1885, "So far as our school matters are concerned, there has been nothing revolutionary in the temper of the present administration, whilst there has been vigor and a laudably progressive spirit."³¹

In 1883, Superintendent Farr called together and organized the "Virginia Conference of County and City Superintendents of Public Free Schools." This organization and similar organizations which followed aided in developing a professional spirit among public school men. The county superintendents were still paid such small salaries that they looked upon their office as an adjunct to some other profession. Doctor Ruffner had called such a conference early in his administration, but it was not made a permanent institution at that time.

The most important development during Farr's administration was the founding of two normal schools, the Normal and Industrial Institute at Petersburg for training colored teachers, and the Farmville State Normal for the whites. In creating these schools, the State was continuing Doctor Ruffner's program.

On March 31, 1879, just before the Readjuster storm

³⁰Quoted in Morrison's *Beginnings of Public Education in Virginia*, p. 95.

³¹School Report 1885, Part III, page 34. Mr. Farr was born in Fairfax County, Virginia, in 1845. He was United States Marshal for the Eastern District of Virginia from 1889 until his death in 1892.

descended on the school system, a resolution adopted by the Senate stated that no provision for the higher education of women had yet been made by Virginia, and requested Superintendent Ruffner to give in his next annual report an account of what other commonwealths and countries were doing along these lines. The Assembly wished this information to guide it in making the necessary legislation for educating the women of the State.

In his report of that year, Doctor Ruffner gave a lengthy account of the development of education for women both in America and in Europe. Men, he said, had "denied her means of intellectual improvement, and then disparaged her intellect." She needed education for her own pleasure and to make a better companion for her husband and children. The Superintendent had no words of praise for "the small class of strong-minded women, who plagued society by their vulgar audacity. But well-developed culture," he said, "will never prevail among us until a woman is regarded, and regards herself, as complete in herself; and not as the necessary adjunct and complement of some man. She is in, and of herself, a perfect being, capable of a noble life, and of making provision for her own wants. Self-culture is her first duty and self-support her only indispensable purpose. Then, if there is opened to her the prospect of a dignified and happy career in the married state, she will be prepared to take advantage of it. But if not, she will neither be impelled by a morbid imagination, nor forced by conscious helplessness, to risk her future on doubtful chances. She will remain an honored and useful member of society."

Virginia already had a number of excellent private academies (the seminaries) in which there were, in some cases "an approach to collegiate study and instruction." But they did not fill the need for higher institutions of learning for women.

The Superintendent then suggested three possible schemes, and discussed each one in turn—coeducation, coordination,

and separate normal schools for women. Coeducation, he said, had been tried in other states and countries with successful results. He predicted that the time was not far distant when "superior institutions generally" would dispense their "high privileges without distinction of sex." But at that time, the idea was "repugnant to our prejudices." He advised the legislature to build separate halls for women near institutions of higher learning for men in order that



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the men and women could be taught by the same faculty in each case. This arrangement, he thought, could be made "in such a way as to be agreeable to public sentiment in Virginia." If this arrangement could not be made, the Commonwealth should create a thoroughly equipped state college like Smith and Vassar.

His last suggestion, and the one which he considered most apt to be adopted, was the establishment of normal schools as required by the constitution. These schools should not only have courses in methods of school organization and instruction, but should also provide the courses necessary for a lib-

eral cultural education—real colleges which provided professional normal courses for teachers. This plan was adopted.

On October 30, 1884, the State Female Normal School at Farmville began its first session in an old academy building. The State had given a meagre \$5,000 for equipment and a \$10,000 annuity. An additional \$2,000 was contributed by the Peabody fund. The attendance during the first session was about 120. Doctor Ruffner, who had served in a lucrative position as a geologist since leaving the public school system, was elected principal of the school. His friend, Doctor Curry, was made president of the Board of Visitors. The Act of March 7, 1884, creating the first of several institutions in Virginia for training teachers, was not passed without a struggle in the Assembly. There were many in that body who felt that teachers were born, not made, and who ridiculed the "Yankee idea of teaching teachers how to teach." Under the leadership of Henry Robinson Pollard, Frank N. Watkins and other liberal spirits, a majority for the measure was secured. Since that time, other normal schools have been established without opposition.³²

Provision was made for giving normal training to men in 1888 by act of April 5 of that year, "to establish a normal school at William and Mary College in connection with its collegiate course." The State appropriated annually \$10,000 to the college, and in 1906 assumed entire control over the institution. This great old college had, like many people in Virginia, lost during the war almost everything but its courage and faith. It had suffered two conflagrations—in 1859 and in 1862—within a short period. It had twice arisen from its ashes, but poorer each time. The soul of the college had been Col. Benjamin S. Ewell, who, though a veteran of the war, now labored earnestly to revive its body. He was armed with a letter from his recent foe, General Meade, the hero of Gettysburg, which described the burning of the college by

³²In April, 1887, Doctor Ruffner resigned and was succeeded in July by John A. Cunningham.

Federal troops as "unnecessary and unauthorized," and which recommended with pleasure the appeal of Professor Ewell to all those who had the means and the disposition to assist him in the good work in which he was engaged.

"A few thousand dollars were subscribed," wrote Prof. Herbert B. Adams, "by benevolent, whole-souled people in New York City, Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, Washington, and elsewhere; but most generous of all gifts were those from Virginia, for there, in the decade following the war, men and women were less able to give to colleges and universities than they are now. Enough money was contributed to restore the main building of William and Mary, and to organize the faculty anew, with departments of Latin, Greek, mathematics, modern languages, natural science, philosophy, and belles-lettres. But the annual expenses exceeded the annual income. Old endowments had been lost; new ones proved inadequate. At last, the professors were all dismissed because their salaries could not be paid. Consequently, students disappeared. The president alone remained at his post. During one year he had one student, but even he has gone. The president remains still at the college. At the opening of every academic year in October, he causes the chapel bell to be rung."³³

In England, as early as 1866, the Virginia poet, John R. Thompson, gave as "a labor of love" his services as a representative of the college in asking funds. After much exertion he succeeded in securing only a small sum of money and a few books. The most substantial gift was twenty pounds contributed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Mr. Thompson ascribed his failure to the "waning interest felt by the English people in the affairs of any of the late Confederate States,

³³Herbert B. Adams, Ph.D. "The College of William and Mary; A Contribution to the History of Higher Education, With Suggestions for Its National Promotion." *Circulars of Information of the Bureau of Education*, Number 1, 1887. Washington, 1887.

since the unhappy close of our war for independence; and the fearfully depressed monetary condition in England.’³⁴

In order to apply the annual proceeds of the small endowment to the payment of its debts, the college suspended its activities for seven years, until this was accomplished.

During the latter part of the war, after the college had been burned, there was some talk of removing the college from Williamsburg. There was also danger that the college might lose some of its vouchers in the numerous raids to which the State was then subjected. President Ewell, in a letter to Hugh Blair Grigsby, said that if these evils could be thwarted the college “would in a reasonable time be more prosperous than ever. If I could contribute to this, I should think I had lived to some purpose.” His labor was rewarded when the doors of the college were again opened on October 4, 1888, with a faculty of six men. Doctor Ewell became president emeritus and was succeeded by Dr. Lyon Gardiner Tyler, son of President Tyler.³⁵ The life of the college was now assured.

³⁴Benjaman S. Ewell manuscripts in possession of his granddaughter, Mrs. R. M. Crawford.

³⁵Dr. John L. Buchanan, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, was first offered the position, but he declined to accept. *Virginia School Report*, 1889, p. 49.

CHAPTER XII

EDUCATIONAL EXPANSION AFTER 1886

In 1886 the democrats once more came into control of the public school system. Mr. Farr was succeeded by Dr. John L. Buchanan. The General Assembly on February 26, 1886, by joint resolution, provided that the office of county and city superintendent in all cases should be deemed vacant on July 1, 1886. But the courts declared the resolution unconstitutional, and they were secure in office until their terms ended June 30, 1889.¹

Doctor Buchanan was followed by Mr. John E. Massey (1890-1897), who in turn was succeeded by Dr. Joseph W. Southall (1897-1906), the last superintendent to be appointed by the legislature.

During the administration of these three men—none of whom were professional public school men—little material change took place in the condition of the schools except the natural increase in the state population and resources. But among the teachers and administrators there was a marked improvement in spirit, which showed itself, during these twenty years—1885 to 1906—in the creation of such great agencies as the Summer School of Methods, the State Teachers' Association, the *Virginia Journal of Education*, and the Cooperative Educational Association of Virginia. The General Education Board and the Southern Educational Board also aided in improving the schools of the State. Back of these forces were such men of strength and vision as Edward C. Glass, Joseph D. Eggleston, Bruce R. Payne, S. C. Mitchell, Willis A. Jenkins, Ormond Stone, R. L. Montague and others.

¹Pendleton vs. Miller. *Virginia School Report*, 1886.

The first of these agencies mentioned above, the Virginia Summer School of Methods, was organized in 1889 and was conducted by Supt. Edward C. Glass of Lynchburg, Virginia, who has been one of the leading school men of the State from the very beginning of our public school system to the present. This school, first conducted in Lynchburg, was a new type of summer training normal for teachers. The courses were eminently practical and were chiefly for the primary and grammar school teachers. Instructors who had national reputations were introduced. After meeting two years at Lynchburg, the school was conducted at Bedford on an enlarged plan, and it was called the Virginia School of Methods. It changed its place of meeting almost every year until it became permanently located at the University of Virginia in 1902. Throughout the whole period Mr. Glass had the able assistance of Mr. Willis A. Jenkins.

In 1902, there were 1,030 teachers present at the School of Methods. Only about fifty of these were men. Women had at last captured the schools. They were attending, in the fifty-nine classes taught every day, courses in the latest methods of teaching the common school subjects, classes in drawing, music, manual training, typewriting and physical culture. Regular college courses were also provided for those who wished to broaden their knowledge and vision. In the South, only the summer school at Knoxville, Tennessee, could compare with the Virginia School of Methods in size or in excellence. It was far in advance of the summer school which Doctor Ruffner attempted to found at the University of Virginia in 1880, although that school was a most progressive one for that time in the State.

The School of Methods remained for several years without official connection with the University. During this period its enrollment constantly diminished on account of the competition of other summer schools, until it had fallen below 300.

Finally, at the suggestion of Supt. Joseph D. Eggleston,



JOSEPH D. EGGLESTON

One of the Most Active Superintendents of Public Instruction
—Now President of Hampden-Sidney College

the School of Methods was reorganized by the University, and became, under the supervision of Prof. Bruce R. Payne, the Summer School of the University of Virginia. The first session began in 1907, with an enrollment of 500. Within three years time, the attendance had increased to 1,350 students. By 1909 the number of courses had grown from fifty-nine in 1902 to 101. The special emphasis placed on the training of high school teachers was a new and most helpful feature. Since that time, the University Summer School has continued to increase in numbers and in usefulness.

While the Virginia School of Methods was developing professional skill, the State Teachers' Association was being inaugurated to bring about closer fellowship among the teachers and to give strength to their cause through union. The first meeting of the present (1923) Virginia State Teachers' Association took place in connection with the Virginia Summer School of Methods from June 30 to July 3, 1891, at Bedford City. It was known in its first constitution as the Educational Association of Virginia. The name that it now bears was adopted in 1916.

This was not the first state educational association. There had also been many local educational organizations in Virginia, some of them antedating the War of Secession. They were more or less permanent and successful. The earliest State Teachers' Association was called by a joint committee of the educational associations of Richmond and Petersburg to meet at Petersburg on Tuesday, December 29, 1863. Forty-four members answered the roll call of the first meeting at 10 o'clock in the lecture room of the First Baptist Church. The Educational Association of Virginia was organized, with President J. M. P. Atkinson, D. D., of Hampden-Sidney College, as its first president. Fifty-four members signed the constitution which had been drafted and paid their fees—five dollars each. The members were, for the most part, teachers and executive heads of the academies and colleges.

Their purpose was set forth in a resolution, "That in view

of the great responsibilities devolved upon us as teachers, and for the purpose of securing a more intimate sympathy among ourselves, and that closer union which is necessary to enable us to meet these responsibilities, we do now organize ourselves into a permanent Educational Association of Virginia." One of the most urgent questions before the association was the need of securing proper text books for Southern children. A committee was appointed to consider the founding of a state journal devoted to the interests of education.

The war in Virginia during the next two years prevented the regular annual meeting. But in the summer of 1866 it assembled at the University of Virginia. President Charles L. Cocke of Hollins Institute was elected president. Among the questions that occupied much attention were the education of negroes, better schools for girls and public school education.

In 1869 President John B. Minor called the attention of the body to the clause in the Underwood Constitution providing for free schools, and said, "It is our duty to fit ourselves as thoroughly as possible to bear our parts in the coming change." Arrangements were also made at this meeting to publish a monthly journal styled, "The Educational Journal of Virginia." This journal, first issued in November, 1869, not only served as the organ of the association, but also became in 1870 the medium for conveying Superintendent Ruffner's instructions and circulars to the teachers and school officials of the public schools. Among its contributors were: John B. Minor, J. L. M. Curry, Matthew F. Maury, William Gordon McCabe, Francis H. Smith, Basil L. Gildersleeve, and other men of note in the State who were active members of the Educational Association. Among the many noble members of this association was President Robert E. Lee, of Washington College, who had declined more remunerative offers to devote himself to education. He was a friend of George Peabody and had served the cause of public education

by his approval of the system and his nomination of Doctor Ruffner as its first head and organizer.

The pioneer Educational Association of Virginia was a man's affair. In 1870, at its fifth annual meeting, Col. Charles S. Venable, of the University of Virginia faculty, offered the resolution, "That the constitution be so amended as to admit lady teachers of the State to full membership and a share in the deliberations of this body." The next



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF HOLLINS COLLEGE, HOLLINS

year a less radical resolution was offered providing that all ladies who were teaching in the State should be invited to join the organization as associate members "with all the privileges of membership except a voice on the floor." This resolution was tabled. It was not until 1874 that the constitution was amended to allow women to become associate members without the payment of any fees. It was provided that such members might be appointed on committees, but might not "vote, hold office or take part in public discussions." In a short while men were reading papers written by women who

were bold enough to have their words repeated in public. This attitude toward women is interesting in view of the fact that the present head of the Virginia State Teachers' Association is a woman and the organization is composed largely of women.

The Educational Association had no regular meeting place. It considered a variety of subjects, but took no vote on any question. But these discussions are said to have "exercised no little influence in shaping the educational policy of the State." It ceased to exist, however, in 1882.²

Eight years later, in 1890, Mr. Willis A. Jenkins, then superintendent of the Portsmouth city schools, began to organize a state teachers' association. The first meeting to discuss the formation of such an association was called by Mr. Jenkins at the Stuart (Patrick County) Summer Normal. He then called a meeting at the Lynchburg Summer Normal. The state superintendent, Mr. John E. Massey, presided. Mr. E. C. Glass was made president and Mr. Jenkins temporary secretary. A resolution was adopted inviting the teachers of the State to meet in July, 1891, to form a permanent organization. In the meanwhile a campaign was conducted in the papers and at the various summer institutes to popularize the movement. The meeting, in Bedford, which resulted, was most successful both in itself and in the organization which it perfected. A constitution was adopted and John E. Massey was chosen as its first president.

The title was changed in 1916 to the Virginia State Teachers' Association. It has now (1923) a membership of more than 11,000. The meetings are held each year at Thanksgiving time in Richmond, where several thousand teachers gather for comradeship, united effort, and inspiration. The Cooperative Education Association, organized in 1904, will be described further on.

²Superintendent William F. Fox of Richmond. An account of these early meetings may be found in the published *Minutes* and from the *Educational Journal of Virginia*. See also *Virginia School Report*, 1891, p. 185.

The following statistics show the growth of the public school system during the first thirty years:³

Year	Enumeration (Between 5 and 21 years.)	Enrollment	Daily attendance	Per- cent- age of attend- ance to enumer- ation	Per- cent- age of attend- ance to enroll- ment	Months taught	Teachers employed
1871	441,021	131,088	75,722	18.4	57.7	4.66	3,014
1880	555,807	220,730	128,404	23.1	58.1	5.64	4,873
1890	652,045	342,269	198,290	30.4	57.9	5.91	7,523
1900	691,312	370,595	216,464	31.3	58.4	6.00	8,954

The development of public schools during these years can be even better shown by the growth in expenditures.⁴

Year	State funds	County and district funds	Other funds (local) ⁵	Teachers' monthly salary		Value of school property owned by districts
				Males	Females	
1871	\$ 362,000	\$330,332	.....	\$32.36	\$26.33	\$ 189,680
1880	596,629	490,039	.....	29.20	24.65	1,177,544
1890	851,467	705,429	\$31,245	31.69	26.61	2,235,085
1900	1,015,538	926,993	70,203	32.47	26.18	3,536,293

These figures do not tell the whole story. The public school system during this period had not only become well fixed in the State, but had also begun to show signs of that remarkable revival which began about 1902.

The growth of public education in Virginia through these three decades was hampered by the fact that 42 per cent of the population at the end of the war was colored. They were illiterate and without property. This condition of affairs hampered schools through race prejudice, unwilling-

³Magruder, p. 25.

⁴Magruder, p. 57.

⁵Gifts and supplemental tuition paid by patrons for a prolonged term or for higher courses.

ness on the part of many whites to educate negro children with taxes collected from the whites,⁶ and the added cost of maintaining two systems of schools in sparsely settled rural districts.

It will not be out of place, therefore, to give here an account of the beginning of negro education in Virginia.

The education of the colored people began in negro regiments in the Federal army under the direction of army chaplains. Assistant teachers were provided by charitable institutions in the North. Soldiers built rude structures as schoolhouses, which were also used as churches. There were many of these in and near Alexandria, Fortress Monroe, Hampton, Norfolk, and Portsmouth, where the Federal army was long established. Then colored churches, deserted houses and vacated barracks were used as schoolhouses for the colored children of the neighborhood.

This work was later directed by the Freedmen's Bureau and was greatly extended. In 1870, when the system was discontinued, there were 412 teachers and over 18,234 pupils, with about 10,000 in daily attendance. The teachers were mostly young women sent down and supported by Northern associations. During the last two years, this aid was supplemented by the Peabody Fund. The first of these schools was established by the American Missionary Association at Fortress Monroe in September, 1861. Hampton and Norfolk were the centers of the work during and after the war. Schools were afterwards established in all parts of the State. A colored normal school was established at Richmond in 1867, with temporary success.

In the year 1867-1868, \$132,399 was spent on negro education. Of this amount, the freedmen contributed \$10,789 in the form of small fees, from 10 to 50 cents a month. The Freedmen's Bureau ceased its educational operations in the summer of 1870.

⁶Only 3 per cent of the State's revenues were paid by negroes as late as 1909. Magruder, p. 59.

Although the system had accomplished much good, it had been very inadequate. This is evident from the fact that the number of colored children enrolled in the state public schools of 1871 was more than double that of the bureau schools of the previous year.

Doctor Ruffner, who was a staunch supporter of colored schools from the start, said, "Let men be convinced that some education is a good thing for laboring people generally, and they cannot long exclude the negro."⁷

The State Superintendent reported that the whites often contributed voluntarily to the establishment of negro schools and made an honest effort to treat them fairly. Great difficulty was found in securing teachers for these schools. White teachers were used and, according to Superintendent Ruffner in 1871, "Many of the teachers of colored schools during the past year were persons of the highest social standing."

Many well intentioned young white women from the North, as already stated, came to Virginia to teach colored children. They knew nothing of conditions in the South, and often offended the white people by their social relations with their patrons. Sometimes they were not understood by the colored people themselves. The teachers in turn resented the coldness of their reception by the whites. They usually became discouraged and left.

The first permanent institution for training colored teachers in Virginia was the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute. Its founder was Samuel Chapman Armstrong, a young Federal officer who had served two and a half years as lieutenant-colonel and as colonel of negro troops. He was afterward appointed Freedmen's Bureau officer in charge of ten counties of Eastern Virginia, with headquarters at Hampton. His two years in this capacity brought him into intimate touch with the problem of race relations. Even

⁷*Virginia School Report*, 1871, p. 68. See *Report* of 1880 for account of the beginning of colored schools in Virginia.

before entering the army, he was fitted by previous experience for the task of educating a backward people. He was born on one of the Hawaiian Islands of missionary parents. His father had been appointed Hawaiian minister of public instruction in 1847. Experience was thus added to a broad, well educated mind, courage, and a generous heart.

Through Armstrong's efforts, a farm on Hampton Roads was purchased in June, 1867, and buildings were erected, with the aid of the Freedmen's Bureau, during the following winter. The school opened under the auspices of the American Missionary Association; and students were admitted in April, 1868. It was granted a liberal charter by the State in 1870. There were then between eighty and ninety students enrolled. In the three departments—academic, agricultural and industrial—there were ten teachers, consisting of seven women and three men. Virginia gave one-third of her land grant money to the institution in 1872 on condition that it take 100 students free of tuition from the county schools. The doors of the school were opened to Indians in 1878.

General Armstrong went about his great work with a rare understanding of the difficulties to be overcome. "Ignorance," he said, "is not the chief difficulty with an ignorant people; a few years' teaching will remove that: but only in generations can the effects of ancestral darkness be done away with. Book knowledge is a great thing, but it does not necessarily make a radical change.^s Our end," he continued, "is not to develop the mind of the negro by collegiate studies * * * but rather to build up manhood and character in our pupils, and through them, among their people." Some idea of the need of the negroes for just this kind of training is shown by the statement of Dr. W. H. Ruffner in 1874 that "the whole negro community furnished probably as complete

^sAddress of Gen. S. C. Armstrong before the Superintendents' Conference, Richmond, 1883. *Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1885*, Part III, p. 23.

an example of a free love commonwealth as ever has been or ever will be seen within the pale of civilization.”⁹

By 1880, Hampton had graduated 353 students, not less than 90 per cent of whom were teaching their people the Hampton ideals.

In 1880 the ratio of the white to the colored population was three to two, while that of schools was three white to one colored. This comparative deficiency in the schools for negroes was due only, in a minor degree, according to Doctor Ruffner, to the fact that some of the school boards “have not been able to rise to the heights of that impartial justice which the law requires; but after watching this very point with peculiar care, I dare not bring this charge against any school board, still less against the boards generally, whose members are commonly men of the highest character, and men who have shown by their works that they are honestly and patriotically trying to educate the entire population. There are many circumstances which give the white people an advantage in procuring schools in a lawful way. There is first the greater density of the white population in most parts of the State. There are large areas over which the colored people are scattered so thinly that schools are impossible. But the greater pecuniary ability of the white people in providing schoolhouses, in supplementing the pay of teachers and in furnishing their children with proper clothing and transportation, and in dispensing with their labor at home, give them advantages over the colored people which cannot be counteracted by school officers without making an illegal discrimination against the white people.”¹⁰

The Readjuster legislature on March 6, 1882, established in Petersburg the colored Normal and Industrial Institute. The act provided that six of the seven members of its board of visitors should be colored, an arrangement which later delivered the institution into the hands of scheming politi-

⁹School Report, 1874, p. 151.

¹⁰*Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction*, 1880, pp. 127, 128.

cians, whose conduct brought discredit upon the school, the board and the Readjuster superintendent of public instruction.¹¹ In the fall of 1885, John Mercer Langston, later colored congressman from the Fourth District, was made its president.

The following statistics for the years 1880 and 1900 give some idea of the growth of colored schools within those two decades:

Year	Enumera- tion (ages 5 to 21)	Enroll- ment	Daily attend- ance	Percentage of attend- ance on enumer- ation	Percentage of attend- ance on enroll- ment	Teachers employed	Percent- age of whom were colored
1880	240,980	68,600	38,764	16.0	56.3	1,256	62
1900	265,258	119,898	66,549	25.0	55.5	2,335	93

Before the War of Secession, Virginia was fortunate in the number and excellence of her higher institutions of learning for men. With the exception of the University of Virginia, the Virginia Military Institute, and Washington College (Washington and Lee University), these institutions were founded and controlled by church organizations. There were also excellent seminaries for women, which gave broad cultural training. Some of these schools offered courses very similar to those of the men's colleges. Two among the most interesting and important of those which still survive today bear the names, Hollins College and Mary Baldwin Seminary.

When war began in 1861, the college halls were deserted for the camps. No better testimony of the loyalty of the Southern people to their cause can be had than the story of the unanimity with which these students volunteered their services. Before the close of the session of 1860-1861, more

¹¹*Senate Journal and Documents, 1885-1886, Governor's Message, p. 29, and Doc. No. 25.*



HAMPDEN-SIDNEY COLLEGE BUILDING
Completed in 1835

than half of the 630 of the University of Virginia students had gone home to join the army. By the end of 1861, 550 of these young men were in military service. Eighty-six of these gave their lives. Many were youths seventeen to twenty-one years.¹²

The students of Hampden-Sidney left for the army in a body commanded by their president, the Rev. (Capt.) J. M. P. Atkinson, D. D. From the Virginia Military Institute went three professors, two assistant professors; and 125 of its alumni were killed in the war; and 300 alumni were maimed. At the battle of New Market on May 15, 1864, 225 cadets from sixteen to eighteen years of age stormed a Federal battery with all the fire of youth and the steady courage of veterans. Eight were killed and forty-six were wounded.

Hundreds of alumni from the Virginia colleges perished on the battlefields or in the hospitals. The epitaph engraved on the tomb of an alumnus of the University of Virginia characterizes many a noble Virginian who answered the long roll: "Born a gentleman, bred a scholar, and died a Christian soldier."¹³ No one can estimate the loss to the Commonwealth in the death of these trained and noble men.

William and Mary and the Virginia Military Institute were burned by Federal troops. Other institutions suffered in many ways. During the session ending on June 30, 1865, there were fifty-five students at the University of Virginia. Of these fifty-five, nineteen had been disabled in battle, five were returned soldiers, and one a furloughed soldier. Twenty paid no fees. The struggle of these institutions for existence after the war was pathetic. Only through great sacrifices made by their faculties and executive officers did they survive.

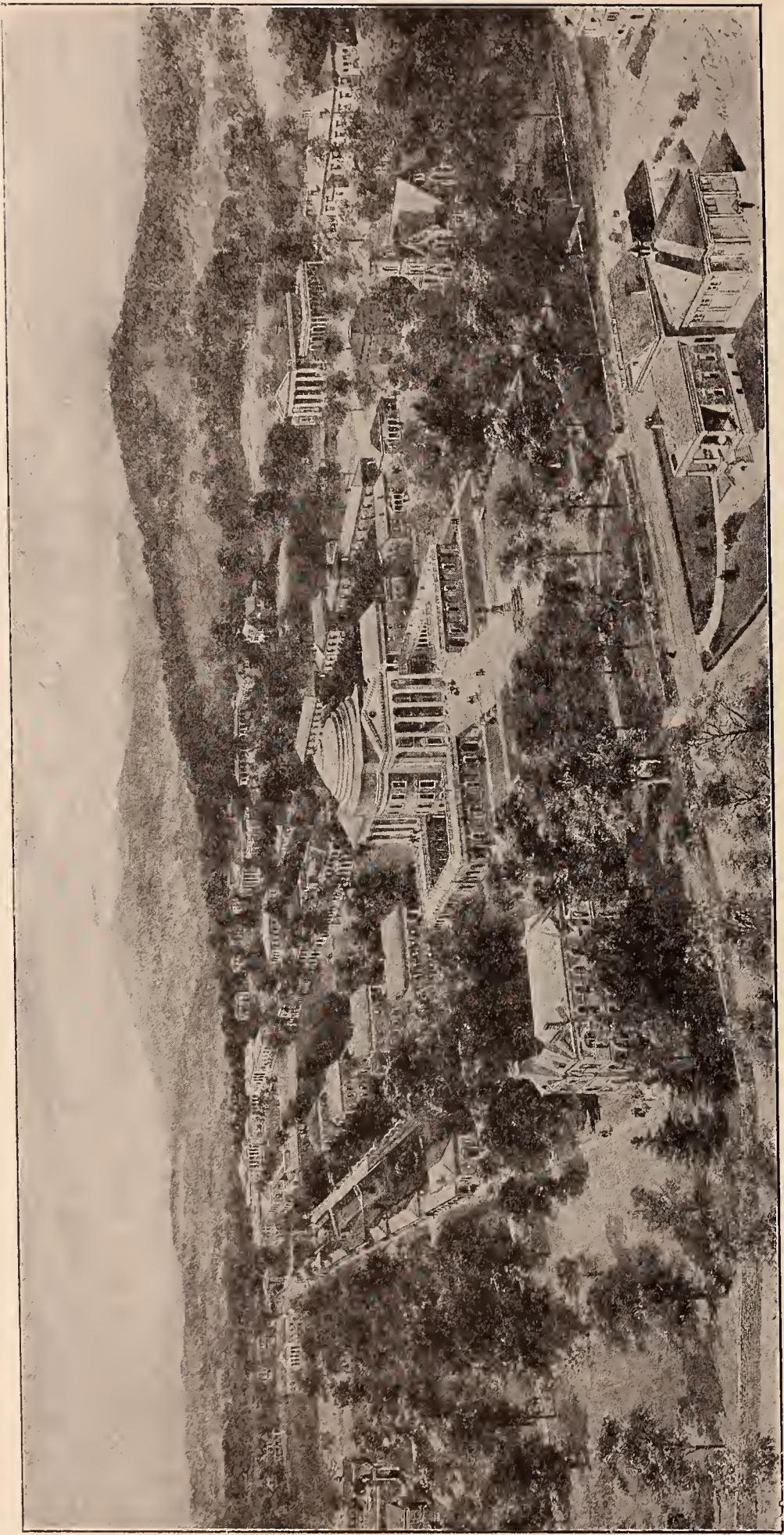
¹²Philip Alexander Bruce. *The History of the University of Virginia*, vol. III, p. 284.

¹³See Philip Alexander Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia*, vol. III, p. 288, for an account of some of "that glorious company of youthful paladins and martyrs."

The improvement in higher education since 1861 can be traced through the changes in the curricula of the colleges. The University of Virginia had in that year thirteen chairs, as follows: Latin; Greek; modern languages; mathematics; natural philosophy; chemistry; moral philosophy; history and general literature; medicine; comparative anatomy, physiology, and surgery; anatomy, materia medica, and botany; common and statute law; and equity, mercantile, and international law.

In 1872, Virginia gave one-third of her land-script funds to Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute and devoted the remainder to the establishment of an Agricultural and Mechanical Institute for white students, at Blacksburg, in Montgomery County. Dr. W. H. Ruffner was chosen secretary of the board of visitors and chairman of the committee to report a plan of organization for the institute. On account of the lack of funds, the faculty was small. Consequently each teacher occupied a variety of chairs—not an unusual thing at that time when the colleges were far below our present standard of professional spirit and efficiency. The following list of the faculty and the subjects which they taught shows a variety for each professor which today would be a disgrace to an institution, a crime to its students, and the physical and mental ruin of its instructors: “Charles L. C. Minor, president; James H. Lane, professor of natural philosophy and chemistry; Gray Carroll, professor of mathematics; Charles Martin, professor of English language and literature. Military tactics was assigned to the chair of natural philosophy and chemistry; modern languages to the chair of mathematics; and ancient languages to the chair of English. The election of a professor of technical agriculture and mechanics was postponed to a meeting to be held in Richmond on the 7th of January next; and natural history assigned to that chair. At this meeting a farm manager will be appointed.”¹⁴

¹⁴*Virginia School Report*, 1872.



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

By 1900 the State was officially connected with the University of Virginia, the Virginia Military Institute, the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, the State Female Normal School at Farmville, the Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute (colored) at Petersburg, the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind at Staunton (established in 1839),¹⁵ the Medical College of Virginia, Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute (colored), and the Miller Manual Labor School.

The Miller Manual School was founded by Samuel Miller, who, when a poor boy living in the Ragged Mountains of Albemarle County, had determined to make a fortune and devote it to the education of children in his own county whose parents could not afford to send them to school. The school was opened for boys on October 15, 1878, and girls were admitted in 1884. In 1901, courses were being offered in algebra, geometry, trigonometry, conic sections, physics for two years, chemistry for two years also, biology for one year, German for three, Latin for four, and English for four also. Chief emphasis was placed on industrial courses, which included drawing—free-hand and mechanical—instruction in woodwork, in forging, in foundry and machine work, designing and making machines, electrical and mechanical engineering, horticulture, arboriculture, floriculture, millinery, dress-making, and cooking. The students were given experience in milking, caring for stock, fruits and vegetables, and attending to electric plants and motors, and steam and water plants and pipes.

The endowment at that time amounted to about \$1,500,000. Two hundred and fifty students—150 boys and 100 girls—were receiving the training which Samuel Miller had longed for as a little boy in the neighborhood and which he had left to them as an enduring monument to his courage, industry, and greatness of mind and heart.

¹⁵The first school for the deaf in America was established in the year 1812, near Petersburg, Virginia, by Col. William Bolling. *Virginia School Report*, 1898-1899, p. 221.

A rapid survey of the institutions of higher learning in Virginia in the dark years which followed the war of 1861-65 may be had from the following table for 1872:¹⁶

COLLEGES

Name	Location	Denomi- nation	Date of organi- zation	Num- ber of in- struc- tors	Students		
					Total num- ber	From Vir- ginia	From other states
University of Virginia Washington and Lee University	Charlottesville	.....	1825	19	365	165	200
Virginia Military In- stitute	Lexington	.....	1782	21	300	81	219
Randolph-Macon Col- lege	Lexington	.....	1839	28	312	139	173
Emory and Henry College	Ashland	Meth.	1831	9	167	118	49
Roanoke College	Washington County	Meth.	1838	5	183	36	147
Richmond College....	Salem	Luth.	1853	11	140	106	34
Hampden-Sidney Col- lege	Richmond	Baptist	1844	11	158	150	8
College of William and Mary	Prince Edward County	Pres.	1776	5	77	54	23
St. John's College ... (Theological department attached)	Williamsburg	Epis.	1693	6	76	72	4
	Norfolk	Roman Catholic	1869	9	35	...	...

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Name	Location	Date of organiza- tion	No. of in- struc- tors	No. of stu- dents
Union Theological Seminary.....	Prince Edward County	1824	4	62
Protestant Episcopal Theological Sem- inary	Fairfax County	1823	5	43
Virginia School for Deaf and Blind..	Staunton	1839	11	125
Virginia Medical College.....	Richmond	1851	13	39
Polytechnic School	New Market (Shenandoah Co.)	1870	3	71
Commercial College	Richmond	1866	5	75
Telegraph School	Richmond	1871	2	25
White Normal School.....	Richmond	1867	3	40
Colored Normal School (Baptist)....	Richmond	1867	5	110
Hampton Institute	Hampton	1868	10	133
Colored Institute (Baptist).....	Richmond	1866	4	70
Old Dominion Business College.....	Richmond	1868	1	60

¹⁶*Virginia School Report*, 1872. The Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical Institute was founded in this year.

On the eve of the educational revival which transformed both the public schools and the colleges after 1900, the institutions of higher learning were suffering from low standards which resulted from poverty. At that time Virginia had ten degree-conferring institutions for men and fifteen for women, not including agricultural, military, and professional institutions. Of the fifteen degree-conferring institutions for women, only one was placed in the first rank by the United States Commissioner of Education. The same unfortunate condition prevailed throughout the South. James Bryce stated in his *American Commonwealth* that, of the 114 institutions of higher learning in the South which conferred degrees to men, only the University of Virginia could then be placed in the first rank. The State contained, however, schools with fine traditions upon which to build as the people regained their prosperity. There also arose as leaders in school work men of a younger generation, more hopeful of the future and also free from many of the burdens which had oppressed their fathers and mothers as they toiled and sacrificed to rebuild the Commonwealth.

CHAPTER XIII

POLITICS, 1885-1901

In 1888, the deadlock which had existed between the Democratic and Republican parties in national politics since 1876 was broken. In the elections of that year the Republicans won the presidency and a majority in both houses of Congress. In Virginia they elected two representatives, and successfully contested the elections in the Third and Fourth Districts. There were three candidates in the Fourth District,¹ Edward C. Venable, Democrat; A. W. Arnold, Republican; and John W. Langston, independent Republican, nominated by a negro mass meeting. The returns of the election gave Venable 13,298 votes; Langston, 12,657 votes; and Arnold, 3,267.

Langston was a Virginia mulatto, who had been educated at the North, where he had lived until he came to Petersburg, Virginia, as a teacher. He was not overscrupulous, although intelligent and fluent. Shortly after his arrival in the State, he entered politics with the determination to defeat Mahone in his own district. For several months before the election he canvassed the district, bitterly denouncing Mahone and the whites of both political parties, and drawing the color line with the greatest severity. The colored leaders who were in the legislature, or had been there, remained true to their party and Mahone. They condemned Langston and the methods that he used to win the colored votes as tending to produce friction between the races and to alienate the white Repub-

¹In this district were the counties of Amelia, Brunswick, Dinwiddie, Greenesville, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Powhatan, Prince Edward, Prince George, and Surry, and the city of Petersburg. The white population in 1880 was 59,011; the colored population 100,487.

licans, and the other whites in the State, who were paying the greater part of the taxes to provide for the colored schools and to support the regular functions of government.² But they were insulted and persecuted by other members of their race who followed Langston. Langston's chief appeal to the people was that there were enough negroes in the district to elect a negro to Congress; and that it was time for them to have a representative there. By his oratory, he worked his ignorant and excitable hearers into a kind of frenzy. The whites were denounced and the fires of race animosities were constantly stirred. The bitterness engendered by this campaign,³ and the revival of the race question in the national

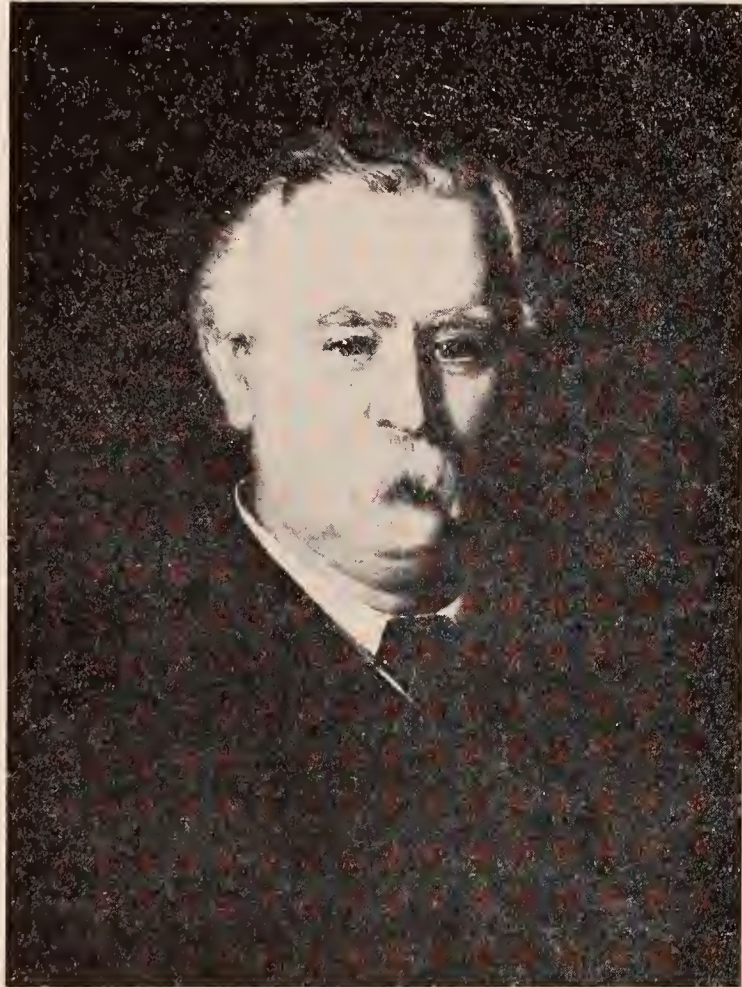
²The United States Census of 1890 shows the following facts:

White population in Virginia.....	1,015,123
Colored population	640,857
Total.....	1,655,980

Value of property belonging to whites.....	\$351,919,071
Value of property belonging to negroes.....	10,503,671

Total.....	\$362,422,742
Percentage of property held by whites.....	97.2
Percentage of property held by negroes.....	2.8
Value of property per capita of whites.....	\$346.67
Value of property per capita of negroes.....	16.39

³The following is a part of the testimony of J. H. Van Auken, a Republican from the Fourth Congressional District of Virginia, before the Committee on Elections of the House of Representatives: "Question. Then explain, if you please, how with Arnold, the regular nominee of the party, supported by its entire organization with all its great influence, skill, management, and outlay, Arnold ran so poorly in the district? Ans. For long months prior to the election, and for long months before the convention, Mr. Langston had, unopposed, been making a canvass, in which he and his emissaries had insidiously and industriously played upon the passions and prejudices of the colored people, basing his claims for Congress largely on the fact that the negroes outnumbered the whites very largely, and it was time for them to send a negro to Congress. He aroused even the women, got up an immense religious fervor in his favor, and aroused the prejudice of the large mass of the unthinking colored people to such an extent as I never witnessed before and hope never to witness again. * * * This feeling was intensified largely under the teachings and leadership of young colored men, who had no memories of the past, which enabled them to properly appreciate what the Republican party had done for their race, hence no feeling of gratitude." Report No. 2,462, House of Representatives, Fifty-First Congress, first session, pp. 3 and 4. See other testimony in the report.



PHILIP W. MCKINNEY
Governor, 1890-1894

elections of 1888 were doubtless largely responsible for the great increase of crime and lynching during the next few years.

The elections in Virginia of 1889 marked the end of Mahone's political career. Having lost his seat in the United States Senate, he sought to become governor of the Commonwealth. The campaign for governor and for members of the Legislature, which were to be chosen at the same time, was conducted with the usual vigor by the two opposing party leaders, Barbour and Mahone. Mahone's party was weakened by the revolt of John S. Wise, William E. Cameron, Frank G. Ruffin, W. C. Pendleton, and their friends, the most brilliant and worthy of his followers. This faction held a convention in October at which about two hundred delegates were present. Resolutions were adopted containing fifteen articles condemning Mahone's actions, and declaring, "That the defeat of William Mahone is essential to the salvation of the Republican party." Pressure was brought to bear on the colored voters from all sides and notwithstanding Mahone's boast that "the colored man is by instinct a Republican,"⁴ not a few colored voters were bought for one dollar or for two dollars each by the Democrats. The usual method of bribing them, however, was to buy their preachers or other leaders. But the great mass of the negroes remained true to their old leaders, who followed Mahone.⁵

The defection of the Wise-Cameron wing left Mahone's party, which had already been deserted in 1883 by the best of the Readjusters, still less reputable, both at home and abroad. Philip W. McKinney, the Democratic nominee, was elected governor by a majority of 42,000 votes out of a total of 283,000. In the legislature, the Democrats won the greatest majority that any conservative party had won in the State

⁴In a speech at Abingdon, September 23, 1889. *Virginia Political Pamphlets*. (In Virginia State Library) Vol. 4.

⁵F. G. Ruffin, *White and Mongrel* (pamphlet), Richmond, 1890. Evidence of contemporaries.

since the enfranchisement of the negroes.⁶ Only about twenty-four Republicans were left in the General Assembly. Among them were five negroes.⁷

The victory of the Republicans in the national elections of 1888 resulted in their attempt to give tangible expression to the desire of regaining their former power, which had been menaced for several years by the creation of the solid Democratic South, at the expense of their colored allies. This desire found expression in a bill introduced in 1890 by Representative Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts. This "Force Bill," as it was called, was designed to place Federal elections in the Southern States under the control of Federal officers and Federal troops. President Harrison had advised such a measure in his first message to Congress in December, 1889. The bill passed the House, but died in the Senate. Around this bill there was centered a bitter debate in Congress and throughout the nation, which served only to stir up past memories and to increase the solidarity of the South against the aggressiveness of Northern Republicans.⁸

The conservative people of the North, however, who had contrasted the ten years of bayonet-negro rule in the South with the decade of home rule there, were willing to let that section manage its own affairs.⁹ The many Northerners who had gone South to invest their money and to live were not

⁶The *Richmond Times*, November 29, 1887; the *Richmond Dispatch*, November 10, 1889; the *Richmond Times*, November 27, 1889; the *Warwick-Richardson Almanac*, 1890 and 1891.

⁷There was one colored senator, N. M. Griggs, of Prince Edward, who represented the counties of Amelia, Cumberland, and Prince Edward. He was one of the members of that half of the Senate which was chosen in 1887. The other four negroes were delegates from Mecklenburg, Nottoway and Amelia, New Kent and Charles City, Elizabeth City, Warwick, and James City.

⁸See *Some Noted Men of the South*, H. A. Herbert, editor.

⁹E. L. Godkin, "The Republican Party and the Negro," in the *Forum*, March, 1889 (vii, 246 ff). For a conservative Southern view of the situation, see Wade Hampton, "What Negro Supremacy Means," *Forum*, June, 1888 (v, 383 ff). See also editorial in the *Nation*, July 3, 1890, p. 5, containing an extract from a speech by Hamilton G. Emart, Republican representative to Congress from the Ninth District of North Carolina.

slow in appreciating the situation from the Southern point of view. By voting for the Force Bill, the Republican representatives from Virginia did not increase their popularity with the majority of the people of the State, nor did their conduct aid their party in the state elections that followed.¹⁰

The political contests in 1888, especially in the Fourth Congressional District, and the agitation over the Force Bill, caused the speedy end of the Republican office-holders in Virginia, at least for a time. In 1890, Democratic representatives were elected in every district of the State. There was opposition in only four districts by regular Republican candidates. Inaction was advised by Republican leaders on the ground that they were being cheated by the Democrats at the polls. In 1891, there were only three Republicans in the General Assembly, and for the first time since 1867 there were no negroes in the State Senate. In 1893 the Republicans made no nomination for governor or for members of the legislature. Some of the Republicans supported independent candidates, and others, candidates of the People's party.

The People's party, aided by the Southern Republicans, succeeded in 1890 and in 1892 in dividing the whites in several of the Southern States, thereby capturing the legislature in South Carolina, Alabama, Missouri, and Georgia; in electing several Congressmen in that section—one of them colored—and in electing governors in Georgia, South Carolina, and Tennessee.¹¹ But memories of the Force Bill and the danger of giving the negroes the balance of power through division of the whites held the South in line for Cleveland in the fall of 1892.

The Virginia Populists had their first convention in 1892, and in the election of that year gave their presidential candidates 12,191 votes. In 1893, they elected thirteen members to the General Assembly. This movement received the sup-

¹⁰The *Richmond Times*, October 21, 1890.

¹¹James M. Callahan, "Political Parties in the South Since 1860," in *The South in the Building of the Nation*, iv, 640.

port of the Republican element in the State and of the more illiterate Democrats. As a result of the fusion of the Republican and People's parties, the Republicans elected about thirty-six members to the General Assembly, and further strengthened that party in the Southwest.

The success of the Democratic party in the national elections of 1892 placed both houses of Congress and the Presidency in the hands of Southerners and their sympathizers, and demonstrated the futility of the bloody-shirt-negro-agitation methods of previous campaigns. In 1894, Congress repealed all the existing statutes providing for Federal supervision of elections. Time, and a more hopeful outlook in the South, and a better understanding of conditions by the North, were bringing the sections of the country closer together. The war with Spain at this time had a nationalizing influence; and the problems of suffrage, confronting the Republican party in the insular possessions, which were similar to those with which the South had been struggling, forced them to see the suffrage question from a new angle. Consequently, the Southern States were left to deal with the suffrage of the ignorant masses within their borders without interference.

This new era in national life was reflected in the political affairs in Virginia. The state government and the bondholders had, in the winter of 1891-1892, reached a settlement which was satisfactory to both sides. Mahoneism had been defeated. New interest was taken in national affairs, in education, economic development, and social reforms. But the old elements of danger remained in politics and were prevented from showing themselves by the use of political methods which were evil in themselves and tolerated only because they prevented greater evils. The governor of the State frankly admitted in his message of December 4, 1895, that prior to 1894 "there had been much confusion and disorder at the voting places; and that large sums of money had been used in every election to corrupt voters by all political parties, and men's ballots had been purchased like stocks in the market;"

and added, "that this condition of affairs should cease, in the interest of our institutions, had long been apparent to every honest and right-thinking citizen." This state of affairs caused grave concern to the people of Virginia, who had begun to realize that the whole body politic was threatened with the infection.

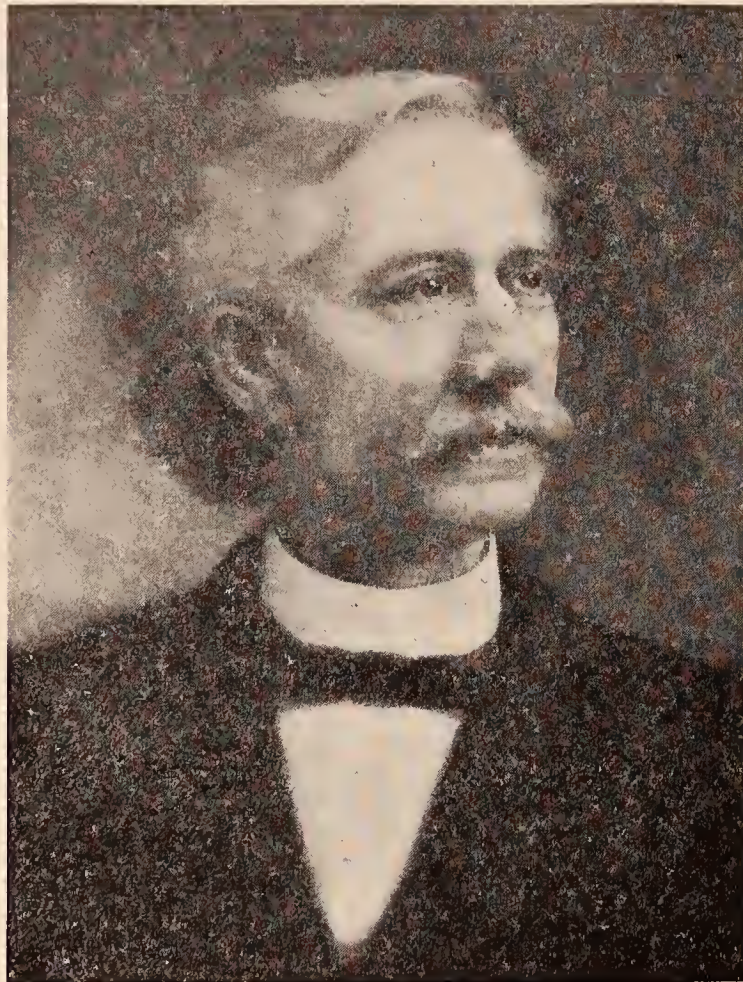
It was in order to secure decent and honest elections and to eliminate the most objectionable of the voters that there was enacted in March, 1894, the Walton Act, which introduced a modified form of the Australian ballot system, the main features of which exist today. Official ballots were required. Booths placed forty feet from outside observers were to be provided to enable the voters to prepare their ballots secretly and without interference. Upon entering the booth, the voter must be given by one of the judges a ballot, which he was forbidden to take outside of the polls. He was allowed two and a half minutes in which to prepare his ballot, and could secure the aid of one of the judges of election in marking it if "physically or educationally" unable to do it himself.¹²

This system of elections was a great improvement over the former one. In the words of the Governor, "The excitement, confusion, and disorder, and the badgering, pulling, and hauling of voters that prevailed to such a disgusting extent," under the old system were eliminated.¹³ Bribing was made much more difficult, since there was no way for the voter, who had to be alone in the booth, to show his ballot after marking it. Bogus ballots, which had played an important part in former elections, could no longer be used. Many illiterate voters were practically disfranchised by the Walton law in spite of the fact that they could receive official assistance if necessary. Negroes often hesitated in getting a Democratic

¹²The original act provided for the appointment of a special constable for this purpose. But the arrangement, which was expensive, and which lent itself easily to fraud, was not desired by the author of the law, and was changed at the next session of the legislature.

¹³Governor's Message, *House Journal*, 1895-1896, p. 34.

election judge to assist them in marking their ballots; others were timid or ashamed to acknowledge their ignorance; and many who attempted to vote could not correctly mark their ballots in the allotted time. In some voting precincts, from a



CHARLES T. O'FERRALL
Governor, 1894-1898

third to a half of the ballots had to be thrown out because they were incorrectly prepared. The governor of the State actually proposed in 1898 that emblems be used on the ballots to distinguish the candidates of the two parties in order to enable illiterate voters to vote as they desired. Fortunately, the General Assembly did not consider his proposition.

Upon losing their votes through legal and illegal methods, and lacking aggressive leadership, the colored people grew apathetic, and many did not go to the polls in the elections of 1896 and 1897. In 1896, the Democrats had their own way in all the black counties; and the white counties of the Southwest and the Valley, now relieved from the fear of negro domination in the Eastern counties, became more independent in politics and gave more support to the Republican party. In 1897, a Democratic governor, Charles T. O'Ferrall, was elected.

In spite of the fact that the white people of Virginia had practically taken the vote from the negroes by the middle of the '90s, they were greatly dissatisfied with political conditions as they existed. The system of fraud that had been built up to defeat Mahoneism by disfranchising the negroes had a demoralizing effect upon the whole electoral system, and was finally used where whites alone were concerned. And the political unity of the whites, made necessary by the solidarity of the colored voters against them, prevented independent voting and thereby virtually disfranchised the whites in national, and sometimes even in state elections. These evils were forcibly brought before the people by the presidential election in 1896. There was in Virginia a strong gold-standard faction in the Democratic party which had the enthusiastic support of the *Richmond Times*, a paper that had been founded to support the "Debt-payers" in their fight against Readjusterism. In the Southwest and the Valley, where the whites had a free hand, and where there was less reason for prejudice against the Republican party, the Republicans either won or ran up large minorities. In the Eastern counties, however, which had been the Republican stronghold in the State on account of the colored vote, Bryan won with large majorities, thereby gaining the State by over 19,000 majority.¹⁴

The men who had opposed the regular Democratic organization were warmly assailed by former political associates

¹⁴W. L. Royall, *Some Reminiscences*, ch. v.

for forsaking the party, and the "gold Democrats" felt that they did not get a square deal at the polls. After this, there was an increased demand for the elimination of fraud in elections and the causes back of it, by the revision of the suffrage article in the State Constitution. The *Richmond Times* led the way in this demand. This desire for cleaner and more independent politics resulted in the new Constitution of 1902.

The changes made by this constitution in the suffrage can be rightly understood and appreciated only by a knowledge of the race conditions and relations—within and without the borders of the Commonwealth—that insured and hastened the calling of the Constitutional Convention of 1901.

The history of race relations in the South shows that most of the friction that has existed between the races since the War of Secession can be traced directly to political agitation. The leaders of the negroes endeavored to keep them united by vilifying the whites and by stirring up race prejudices and passions. Their propaganda was more easily spread on account of the advent of the younger generation of negroes, who were reared in the years of turmoil during and after Reconstruction, and who lacked both the friendship of the whites, and the training and discipline that were given their fathers before the War of Secession. The percentage of older freedmen on the prison records was comparatively low. The records of the Virginia penitentiary for the years 1871 to 1888, inclusive, reveal that an average of 67 whites and 247 negroes were received into that institution yearly. The census figures of 1880 show that the percentage of negroes received yearly into the penitentiary was seven times as great as that of the whites.¹⁵ Even after making allowance for possible discrimination against the negroes by the courts, the contrast is very striking. However, such statistics do not show that the more unfortunate race was proportionately inferior, because crime

¹⁵Frank G. Ruffin, *Cost and Outcome of Negro Education in Virginia*. Table prepared by W. W. Moses, superintendent of the Virginia penitentiary, 1871 to 1888, inclusive.

is the ally of poverty and ignorance the world over. But such statistics were naturally used in those days against the negro as such.

The general lawlessness that followed the war, the lack of any system of police in the rural districts, which contained most of the population of the State, and the consequent inability of the state and local governments to afford proper protection, compelled the people to take the law into their own hands to a great extent. Under these conditions, mob violence could not be readily checked. In those days, lynchings for the crime of rape, which is the most unspeakably hideous of all crimes to a Southerner, especially when the offender is of another race, was deemed the only quick and certain method of punishment and a wholesome lesson to would-be offenders. It was considered necessary for the protection of women scattered on lonely plantations throughout the country districts.¹⁶

Records show that lynchings were the result of the nature of the crime rather than of mere race prejudice, as was generally believed outside of the State. But there was only a short step between lynchings for rape and lynchings for murder—and for even lesser crimes. From 1880 to 1888, inclusive, there were eight white and eighteen colored people lynched, or an average of one white to two colored victims a year in Virginia. Of these twenty-six, nine were accused of rape, or attempted rape, and twelve of murder. The lynchings for murder were often caused by the brutal manner in which the crime had been committed.

In the decade of the '90s, contemporary evidence of all kinds shows that the number of rapings by negro men were increasing at an alarming rate. This marked increase began to be evident about the end of the year 1888. The increase was without doubt due to a lack of the proper restraint in the younger generation and to the excitement arising out of the state and national elections of 1888 and 1889. There occurred in 1888 the election to Congress of John M. Langston,

¹⁶Governor McKinney's Message, *House Journal*, 1893-1894.

an illegitimate mulatto, who openly advocated the amalgamation of the races and other things repugnant to the whites. The character of the campaign which he conducted has been described above. It did much to increase the strained relations already existing between the two races. Then in 1889 came another election, in which negroes were led in masses to the polls to aid Mahone, who met his last great defeat in that campaign. There were the usual strained race relations that followed such campaigns.

After 1888 the number of cases of rape was increasing at an alarming rate throughout the South.¹⁷

Bishop Atticus G. Haygood, than whom, according to James Bryce, the negro had no better friend, quotes Dr. E. E. Hoss, editor of the *Christian Advocate* (the chief organ of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South) as saying that "300 white women had been raped by negroes within the preceding three months." "I believe," added Bishop Haygood, "Doctor Hoss's statement to be under rather than above the facts in the case. Not a few such crimes are never published." Bishop Haygood remembered only one such crime that occurred before the War of Secession. He said that Reconstruction has taught the negro his rights, not his responsibilities; license rather than liberty. The younger negroes were taught that it was their business to keep the white Southern man down and to hate him, rather than to be guided by him. A certain class of Northern newspapers dilated on the horrors of lynching, and reported all violations done negroes, while barely commenting on the nature of the crime, or the horrors of rape and murder. Public records show that the negro criminals were for the most part those who grew up under the loose regime of Reconstruction.

¹⁷Contemporary newspapers, periodicals of all kinds, contemporary memoirs, etc. As an example, see the following articles in one volume of the *Forum*, vol. xvi (September, 1893-February, 1894); Atticus G. Haywood, "The Black Shadow in the South;" Charles H. Smith, "Have American Negroes Too Much Liberty?" L. E. Beckley, "Negro Outrage No Excuse for Lynching;" Walter Hines Page, "The Last Hold of the Southern Bully."

Virginia offered no exception to the rule. The most brutal as well as the most frequent criminals in these cases were negroes. When whites were guilty of such brutality as was shown by the blacks, they met with the same punishment. From 1880 to 1897, inclusive, sixty-four lynchings occurred in Virginia. Twenty-six were for rape, or attempted rape, and twenty-seven were for murder. Fifty-one victims were colored, and thirteen, white. The greatest number of lynchings occurred during the five years that followed 1888 (1889 to 1893, inclusive). There were thirty-five during this brief period. The victims in all but five cases were colored. The crime charged against fifteen of these was rape or attempted rape and that against fourteen was murder.¹⁸

¹⁸LIST OF LYNCHINGS IN VIRGINIA FROM 1880 TO 1897 INCLUSIVE.

Year	Whites lynched	Colored	For rape	Attempted rape	Murder	Felonious assault	Terror to his neighborhood	Seduction of a white female (idiotic)	Stabbing	Shooting an officer attempting arrest	Attempted murder	Horse stealing	Burglary	Total number of lynchings each year
1880 ..	1	2	2	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	3
1881 ..	..	3	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
1882 ..	2	2	1	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
1883 ..	1	2	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
1884 ..	1	2	..	1	..	1	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	3
1885 ..	1	2	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
1886 ..	1	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1	..	3
1887 ..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
1888 ..	1	2	2	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
1889 ..	..	7	2	3	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	7
1890 ..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
1891 ..	..	6	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	6
1892 ..	4	5	2	2	5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9
1893 ..	..	12	2	2	6	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
1894 ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0
1895 ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	0
1896 ..	..	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
1897 ..	1	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Total..	13	51	15	11	27	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	64

This table is found in *Senate Journal*, 1897-1898, p. 16. (Also in *House Journal* of that year.) Governor O'Ferrall says of it, "This table is authentic and is prepared from the reports of the clerks of courts of the various counties and cities from 1880 to 1894, and from direct information in the executive office since."

Twelve negroes were lynched in one year—1893. On September 20 of that year, a climax was reached in mob violence when a riot occurred in Roanoke, a peaceful and thriving town outside of the black belt. A negro man assaulted an old lady in a lonely house, robbed her, and beat her almost beyond recognition. She revived and informed the authorities, who found the criminal and lodged him in jail. Upon hearing of the crime, a crowd gathered and demanded the negro. The mayor of the town ordered it to disperse and finally called out the militia. But the mob attacked the jail and the militia in spite of the entreaties of the mayor and the warning from the commanding officer of the militia, that they would be fired upon if necessary. The militia was overcome and the negro lynched. But this was accomplished only after eighteen people had been killed and twenty-seven, wounded.¹⁹

This affair emphasized the dangers and the disgrace of mob rule and aided in crystallizing public sentiment against such occurrences. In his message to the legislature of December 6, 1893, Governor McKinney gave an account of the riot and bitterly condemned the lynching. He said that the government of the State was now firmly established and in the hands of the people of Virginia, and that an excuse for mob rule no longer existed. "The law in the State of Virginia," he said, "will be enforced * * * The military when ordered out will carry loaded rifles, and will use them when ordered to do so by the officers in command, and the consequences must rest upon the heads of those who make it necessary."

The State was fortunate in the election as governor, in the fall of 1893, of Charles T. O'Ferrall, who also vigorously opposed mob violence and who promised in his inaugural address to enforce the law rigidly and to prevent lynchings to the best of his ability. He was fearless in his effort to redeem his promise. No lynchings occurred during the first two years of his administration, 1894 and 1895. The militia

¹⁹*Senate Journal*, 1893-1894, Governor's Message, pp. 45-50.

was employed, however, in several counties to prevent mob violence.²⁰ In 1896, only one lynching took place in the State; and in 1897 one white man and one negro were lynched. Governor Tyler was able to make a similar report during the next administration. During 1898 and 1899, there occurred two or three lynchings, "which," according to the Governor, "could not have been prevented, though the local officers did all in their power." For the next two years of his administration, he said, "The order of our state has been good, and it is a gratifying fact that the prevalence of that menace to civilization—mob law—has been notably less. With the exception of one or two counties, the people of the State have been law-abiding and peaceful."²¹ During the next seventeen years Virginia was free from lynchings, and the attempted lynchings were much fewer.²²

The provocations for lynchings had not ceased, however, and continued to strengthen the demand for the removal of the negroes from politics.²³

According to Governor O'Ferrall's report in December, 1897, "The rapidity with which the number of criminal assaults has grown in the Southern States, and in fact in the country at large recently, should stimulate the legislature of every state to take the most vigorous steps to stamp out the horrible crime." Prof. R. H. Dabney of the University

²⁰The militia was used in the following counties for this reason during those two years: Prince William, Augusta, Frederick, Clarke, Lunenburg and Albemarle. (*House Journal*, 1897-1898, p. 21.) During the last two years of the administration, 1896 and 1897, the militia was called out to aid the civil authorities by the mayors of Alexandria, and Portsmouth, and by the sheriffs of Albemarle, Shenandoah, Fairfax, and Culpeper counties.

²¹*House Journal*, 1899-1900, p. 37; *Ibid.*, 1901-1902, p. 34.

²²For a thoughtful and interesting discussion of this subject see Thomas Walker Page, "Lynching and Race Relations in the South," *North American Review*, August, 1917.

²³During four years, ending December, 1897, there were committed to the penitentiary, for various terms, fifty-eight criminals for attempted rape, and twenty-nine for rape. Of these eighty-seven, twenty-four were white and sixty-three were colored. In addition to these cases, there were eight men hanged for the crime. *House Journal*, 1897-1898.

of Virginia, wrote in 1901, "Race hatred has not yet been violent except in wreaking vengeance for the crime of rape. But the steadily growing frequency of this crime is fearfully increasing the bitterness * * *,"²⁴

As an outcome of the friction between the races, an act was passed by the Virginia legislature requiring railroad companies to provide separate coaches for white and colored passengers.²⁵ This, like most legislation of its kind, resulted from a demand for it extending over a number of years²⁶ because of numerous instances of strife between members of the two races when thrown together on cars. These instances became more numerous; and the proverbial straw which brought matters to a climax came early in January, 1900. It was a relatively small affair, and would not have attracted state-wide attention had it not been one of several such happenings that had occurred within a few weeks of each other. A half drunken negro made himself very disagreeable to a white woman by whom he was sitting in a car. When asked to take another seat, he refused and was ejected by a white man. There were other drunken negroes on the car with guns, and a fight, which would have proven a serious affair, was narrowly averted. This event was the occasion of much discussion of race relations throughout the commonwealth, which resulted in the enactment of the law, on May 12, 1900, which prevented the recurrence of such troubles.

The political situation in Virginia was strongly influenced by the political and race relations that existed in other Southern states at this time, especially by those of the adjoining state of North Carolina. It will not be a digression from the subject under discussion to pause here to note briefly the situation in that commonwealth during the '90s.

According to the census of 1890, there were 1,055,382

²⁴Article in the *Richmond Times*, October 6, 1901.

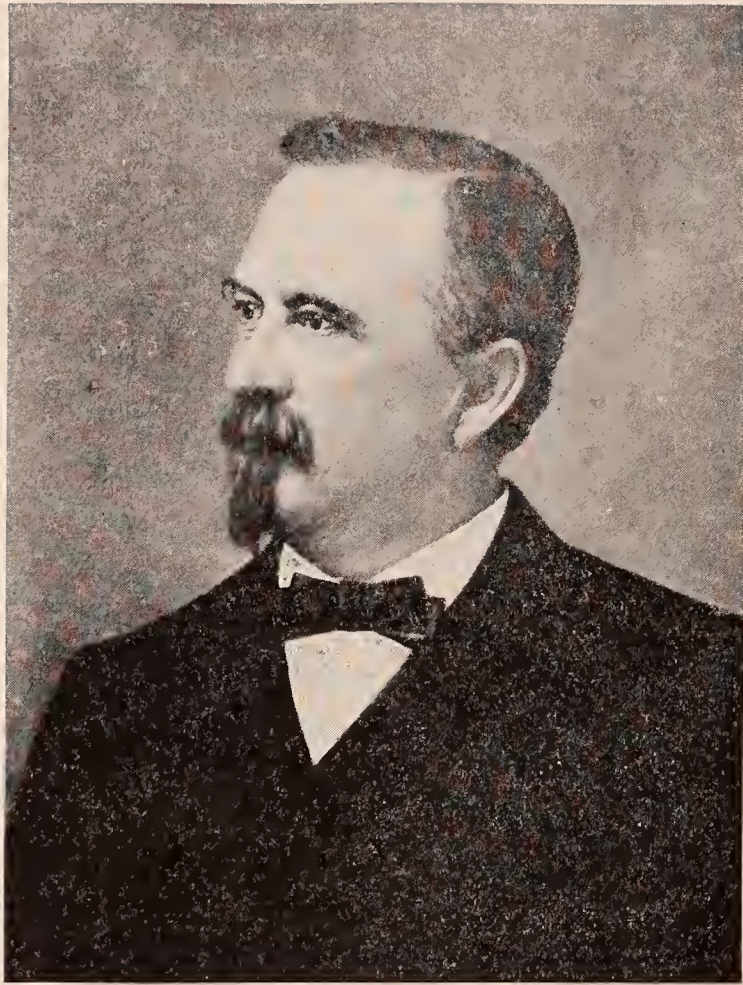
²⁵Most of the other Southern States had already passed similar laws. G. T. Stephenson, *Race Distinctions in American Law*.

²⁶Governor's Message, *House Journal*, 1891-1892.

whites and 561,018 negroes in that state, the percentage of negroes in the total being, therefore, 34.7.²⁷ In fifteen counties the negroes were in the majority. But the whites, who controlled the state government, had made laws which kept in their hands the government in these counties during the twenty-three years prior to 1894. In 1894, Republicans, Populists and negroes fused and gained partial control of the state and local offices. Two years later they got complete control of these offices. A Republican governor was elected, and the legislature came into the possession of the fusionists. The legislature immediately decentralized the state government in such a way as to make the negroes supreme in those counties and towns in which they were in the majority. The offices were filled with incapable whites and negroes. Two years of riot and corruption, like those which prevailed in the days of Reconstruction, followed. One thousand negroes became office-holders in the State. There were 300 negro magistrates, and 27 negro postmasters. The collector at the port of Wilmington was colored. The offices in the Eastern counties were almost all filled with negroes and their white leaders. Thus the counties in a large part of the State were ruled by the mass of ignorant and shiftless negroes and worthless whites, who paid only a negligible part of the taxes, and who were most inefficient and corrupt in administering the affairs of government. Conditions became intolerable. Neither the property nor the persons of the whites in the black belt were safe. Crime increased and went unpunished. The negroes who had been peaceful under the former government had their heads completely turned by the sight of their fellows in office, and by the speeches of their leaders. They became unbearably insolent.

In Wilmington, where three-fifths of the population was colored, white women were even slapped in the face or pushed from the sidewalks without provocation by negro women.

²⁷These figures closely resembled those for Virginia at that time.



JAMES HOGE TYLER
Governor, 1898-1902

When the whites began to arm and to make plans to defend themselves from insult and injury, there was talk among the negroes of poisoning the whites and of burning their homes at night. In November, the white men organized to insure order on election day. On the day after election, they destroyed the press of a negro newspaper that had published an article, which, not only insulted white women, but also tended to encourage the crime of rape, a brutal instance of which had just been committed by a negro in an adjoining county. No other property was destroyed by the whites and no physical harm was done anyone. About a mile from the scene of this occurrence, however, a negro mob fired at a group of white men on the street, injuring one seriously. A fight ensued. There were two or three other affrays during the day, and by night thousands of negroes were hiding in the swamps. During this riot, seven negroes were killed and thirteen wounded. There was no wanton killing or vandalism. Three whites were wounded. In the midst of the tumult, the incapable town authorities resigned and the leaders of the whites were put in charge of town affairs. The new officials immediately issued an order that business would be resumed as usual on the following day, and that all should appear at their tasks without firearms. The order was obeyed. Peace was restored. Parties were organized to go in search of the fugitive negroes, and to assure them that they could safely return to their homes; and vigilance committees saw to it that those who had not fled were not molested in their work. The whites had accomplished their purpose. They were in control of the town and had given the negroes a warning that insolence and lawlessness must cease. There were other riots in the State.

In 1896, the white Democrats effected a revolution in North Carolina, and came once more into control of the legislature. In 1900, Charles B. Aycock, in opening his successful campaign for governor, said that the state constitution must be amended to disfranchise the negro, and that order and devel-

opment demanded a change in the system of government.²⁸

North Carolina passed her law for separate coaches for the races in 1899, and made a new constitution, which disfranchised most of the negroes in 1900.

The revolution across the state line in North Carolina was watched with interest and sympathy by Virginians, who had similar elements of danger to guard against.

Of the many methods used to win the votes or the neutrality of the negroes during the '80s, and especially during the '90s, bribery was the one most generally resorted to. The usual sum for an individual vote was one or two dollars. The most ordinary way of bribing was to pay negro preachers. With not a few worthy exceptions, the negro preachers in the South, especially in the rural districts, were chosen, not on account of any very superior moral fitness, but because of their fluency and aggressive personality. They were, therefore, the natural leaders of their race. The church was, at that time, a kind of political organization. Those of its members who voted with the whites against the will of the preachers were ostracized, and were sometimes turned out of the church. These preachers appealed to the emotions rather than to the head; and they kept the negro voters under their control.²⁹

An interesting example of the influence of these men in politics is furnished by the election in Richmond in 1875. There were to be elected two state senators from Richmond.

²⁸For an account of the "revolution" in North Carolina and of the race troubles in Wilmington in particular, see the following articles, which are valuable in giving unbiased views of this and similar race troubles and their causes: "The Race Problem in the South—I. The North Carolina Revolution," by A. J. McKelwey, editor of the *North Carolina Presbyterian*, II. "A Negro's View," by Kelly Miller, of Howard University, in the *Outlook*; Henry Litchfield West, "Race War in North Carolina," the *Forum*, xxvi, 574 ff. (January, 1899.) Alfred M. Waddell, article in *Proceedings of the Montgomery Conference on Race Problems in the South*, 1900; and the *Richmond Times*, August 1, 1900.

²⁹Contemporary evidence; Philip Alexander Bruce, *The Plantation Negro as a Freeman*.

Gen. Bradley T. Johnson and William E. Tanner were the Democratic nominees. The Republicans had no regular nominees; but two independent candidates, Knight and Starke, entered the field, with the expectation of being elected by aid of the negro vote. Johnson, "at very considerable expense," had organized Johnson clubs among the negroes, and had a large number of colored voters pledged to him. There were eighty-five pledged to him in one precinct. Up to the Sunday preceding the election (which took place the next day), Johnson had no opposition among the negroes. On Sunday night, however, when all the negroes attended church, their preachers announced from their pulpits throughout the city that all were expected to vote for Knight and Starke. Tanner and Johnson were elected but did not receive a single negro vote.

Besides the preachers, other persons of influence among the colored people were paid \$15, \$20 and sometimes \$50 or more, for their aid in a certain district, or for a certain number of votes. As a traveler in the South expressed it, "The negro vote, like the cotton crop is always on the market, to be sold to the highest bidder * * * The negro is for sale today as much as ever."³⁰

Other methods were used to defeat the colored vote. Ballot boxes were stuffed with tissue ballots and otherwise tampered with. In some counties, the negroes' love of running for office proved their undoing. Several colored candidates for office would enter the field. The whites would studiously avoid the appearance of uniting on one candidate, and at the same time agree among themselves to vote in a body for only one man. In some instances, the whites went so far as to put forward colored candidates to divide the negro vote. Intimidation was seldom resorted to. In Charlotte County a colored candidate for the legislature, while making a political speech, was shot by a white man. The victim, a mulatto shoemaker named Joseph R. Holmes, had represented Charlotte and Halifax counties in the Underwood Convention. There were

³⁰Henry M. Field, D. D., *Bright Skies and Dark Shadows*.

no more negro candidates for office in Charlotte County. However, this was a very extreme example of intimidation.

The Walton law of 1894 prevented much confusion at the polls, but it was not sufficiently effective in weeding out objectionable votes and in preventing fraud.³¹ It was generally admitted in 1900 by men of all parties in the State that the negroes were being defrauded at the polls, and that those who had charge of the party machinery in local elections often treated the whites who differed with them, in the same fashion. Men of the younger generation were losing their respect for the sanctity of the ballot and for politics in general. A delegate from the Southwest made the following statement on the floor of the Constitutional Convention of 1901 without having its truthfulness challenged: "I do not deny, and I am ready to show, if it were necessary, that they [elections] have not been fair in the black belt; but it is of no use to show that, because it is admitted all over this floor by every member on it."³² The need for an amended constitution to remedy this state of affairs was very urgent.

³¹The Richmond *Times*, January 4, 1898; address of Governor J. Hoge Tyler to the legislature, *House Journal*, 1899-1900, p. 32; John Garland Pollard, "Unrestricted Suffrage and Its Corrupting Influences," the Richmond *Times*, July 15, 1900; numerous references in the newspapers and other contemporaneous sources of 1900 and 1901.

³²*Debates of the Constitutional Convention of 1901*, p. 211; other contemporary sources.

CHAPTER XIV

CONVENTION OF 1901-1902 AND LATER POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The question of calling a convention to revise and amend the Constitution of 1868 was submitted to the people three times prior to 1900.¹ The Constitution of 1868 provided that no such election should take place in the State until after the general election to be held in 1888, and that a vote be then taken on the question. But the danger of a return to Mahoneism was too great at that time for the whites to advocate any measure restricting the suffrage or reducing the number of local offices. Furthermore, it was not felt that the State could then afford to bear the expense of a convention. Economy had been written into all political platforms for many years. A convention was advocated, therefore, by neither party. The first referendum for a convention was defeated by a vote of 63,125 to 3,698. By 1897, public sentiment in its favor had greatly increased. In the election of that year, the convention was again defeated—this time by a vote of 183,453 to 38,326. But no definite program could be agreed upon as a basis for revising the constitution. As in the previous election, no party was committed on the subject and no canvass was made.

In 1900, the General Assembly again provided for a vote on the calling of a convention.² Both parties now took sides on the question. The Democratic state convention at its meeting in Norfolk on May 2, 1900, advocated the calling of a

¹Numerous amendments had, however, changed the original constitution in a great many different places. For a convenient list of these amendments, see J. N. Brennaman, *A History of Virginia Conventions*, p. 122.

²Act of March 5, 1900.

convention to revise the Underwood Constitution. It also passed a resolution "That it is the sense of this convention that, in framing a new constitution, no effort should be made to disfranchise any citizen of Virginia who had a right to vote prior to 1861, nor the descendant of any such person; and that when such constitution shall have been framed, it shall be submitted to a vote of the people for ratification or rejection."³ The Republican party declared emphatic opposition to a constitutional convention. "Let every voter," urged the chairman of the party, "get to the polls on the 24th of May, 1900, and show the attempted outrage under."⁴ In this election, 77,362 votes were cast for a convention, and 60,375 against it.⁵

By this time the Republican party had taken deep root in the Southwest. As long as the East was swamped by negro-carpetbag rule under Republican leadership, the West was solidly Conservative or Democratic. When the East became solidly Democratic, the Southwest became largely Republican. This change in political affiliation was due in part to the old sectional spirit that made the opposition of the West to the East in politics traditional in Virginia. The influence of Mahoneism and Populism, the freedom from the menacing presence of the negro in local politics, and the growth of large mining interests in the Southwest—all united in turning this section towards the Republican party.

Mahone had made a strong appeal to the Western counties. Mahoneism paved the way for Populism; and it paved the way for the Republican party, which was associated with both Mahone and the People's party in Virginia. The Republican party was still the colored man's party in the State. But in the white counties of the Southwest, the negro was not a factor in local politics, and in state politics there was little for the Southwest to be anxious about so long as the whites were

³The *Richmond Times*, May 3, 1900.

⁴*Ibid.*, May 11, 1900.

⁵The total possible vote in the State was about 447,000.

in control of the political machinery. Perhaps the greatest cause of the opposition in the Southwest to the calling of a convention was the fear that the illiterate whites of that section would be excluded along with the illiterate negroes in the Eastern counties. In the Ninth Congressional District, which lies wholly West of the Blue Ridge Mountains, there were more than nine times as many white as negro voters. Yet there was one voter out of ever 4.2 in the district who could not read and write. The percentage of illiteracy was greater among the white than among the colored voters of the district, the ratio of illiterate to literate white voters being 1 to 4.6, and that of the colored 1 to 21. In the Fourth District, on the other hand, which remained longest under negro domination, and which was one of the most aggressive sections in bringing about their disfranchisement, there were one-sixth less white than colored voters. In this district, the ratio of white illiterate to literate voters was 1 to 10.8, and the ratio among the negro voters was 1 to 1.6. The proportion of white voters in the Ninth District who could not read and write was more than twice as great as that in the Fourth District; and the proportion of negro voters in the former district who could read and write was thirty-three per cent larger than that in the Fourth District.⁶

In the black counties, the burden of taxation fell upon the white minority, and the whites desired the control of expenditures. The total amount of taxes paid by the negroes of the State for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1902, if used solely to cover the amount appropriated for colored schools, would cover less than half of the expenditure for their schools alone—exclusive of the pay of county and city superintendents and the expenses of the State Department of Education.⁷

⁶*Debates of the Constitutional Convention of 1901*, p. 3,000; *Journal and Documents of the Convention of 1901*. For counties of the district, see opposite page.

⁷The following tables, from the *Report of the Auditor* for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1902, show the economic differences that existed between

Although no little progress had been made in bettering their condition, the majority of them still remained ignorant and were a constant social danger.⁸

The Constitutional Convention of 1901-1902 began its session on June 12. Of the 100 delegates, 88 were Democrats, and 12, Republicans. There were men of all shades of political beliefs represented. The personnel of the convention was much above that of the average legislative body of the State. John Goode, who had served in the Secession Convention of 1861, and in the Confederate Congress, was elected chairman.

In the campaign preceding the convention, and in the convention itself, no attempt was made to conceal the main purpose of that body. The negro had been a failure and a menace in politics. As long as he was in politics, the color line was a line of friction and danger to both races. Therefore, he must be removed, not only because he was for the most part an ignorant and irresponsible voter who had usually stood solidly behind the worst elements in state politics, but also because he had been taught in the beginning to vote as a negro and must therefore be disfranchised because he was a

the two races in Virginia at this time. The white population was 1,192,858 and the colored population was 661,326, or 32.6 of the total population.

Total Value of Personal Property Owned by			
	Whites	Negroes	Total
	\$108,660,967	\$ 4,298,501	\$112,959,468
Total Value of Land, Town Lots and			
Buildings.....	316,633,102	13,281,889	329,914,991
Taxes Paid			
	By Whites	By Negroes	Total
On Personal Property			
For the Government.....	\$ 326,174.16	\$ 20,556.33	\$ 346,730.49
For Schools	101,119.29	4,281.04	105,400.17
Total.....	\$ 427,293.29	\$ 24,837.37	\$ 452,130.66
On Real Estate:			
For the Government.....	\$ 942,718.99	\$ 39,818.79	\$ 982,537.78
For Schools	314,453.34	13,293.84	327,747.18
Total	\$1,257,172.33	\$ 53,112.63	\$1,310,284.96
On Income	64,190.15	33.00	64,223.15
Capitations	264,690.00	125,533.00	390,223.00
Total Taxes	\$2,013,345.77	\$203,516.00	\$2,216,861.77

⁸W. E. B. DuBois, *The Negroes of Farmville, Virginia*; contemporary evidence of various kinds.

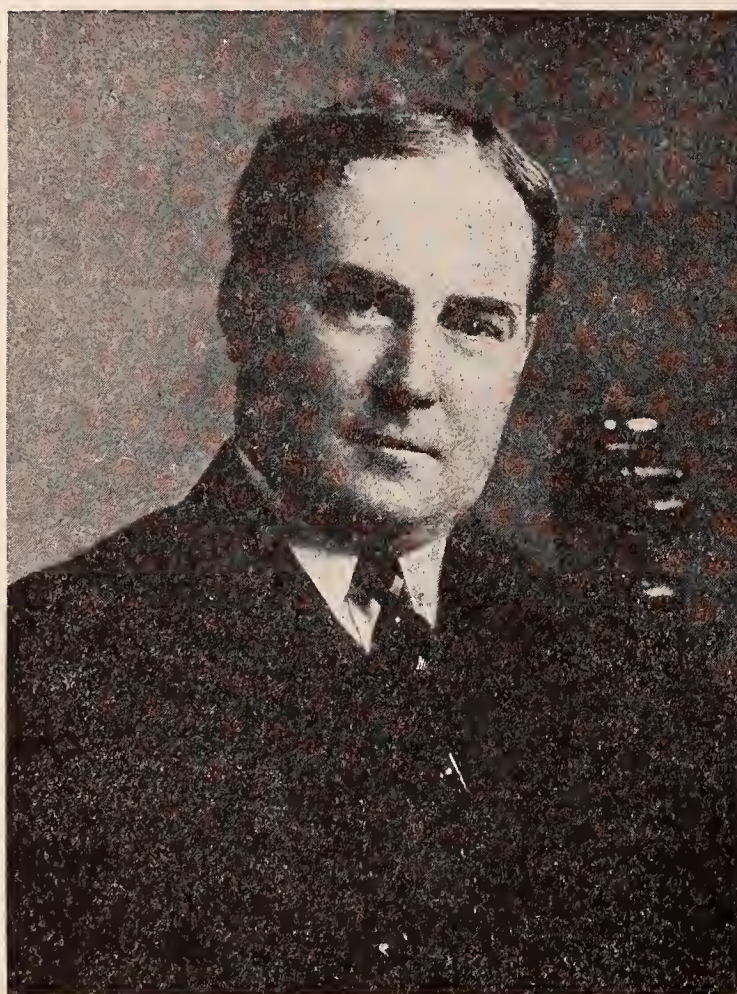
negro.⁹ There was no animosity displayed against him in the speeches of the convention. His political sins were laid at the feet of his teachers; and his shiftlessness and moral shortcomings were regarded as inherent in his race, or as the result of his environment.

Some idea of the earnestness with which the people longed for decent and independent politics may be had from the tenor of a speech by Mr. Thom before the democratic Conference in October, 1901, in which he said: "The problem is this—to take this black man out of the suffrage of Virginia as a factor and remove him as a disturbing and demoralizing influence. We do not fear his numbers. We fear his presence. As long as he is in the suffrage with us in any numbers, our curse is still upon us, we will still be in the grasp of moral and intellectual servitude—servitude to the idea that we cannot think, that we cannot act, with independence on any of the great public questions that confront the citizens of this country—and he will still be a destroyer of the morality of our political standards, because there will always be a large faction among the white people of Virginia that will continue to justify anything that will keep the black man out and put the white man in political control. * * * I plead for a new emancipation, not now of the black man, but of the white man, whom the black has enslaved in turn."¹⁰

The task before the convention was most difficult. There were some delegates from the blackest counties, which had suffered most from the negro rule, who desired a wholesale disfranchisement of the negroes in the most arbitrary manner, and some who wished to eliminate the ignorant and vicious voters regardless of color. There were delegates from the Republican counties of the Southwest which had suf-

⁹It should be remembered in this connection that the first "Solid South" was black and Republican. There was no "Solid South" before the days of Reconstruction.

¹⁰Quoted by Albert E. McKinley in *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. xviii, p. 480; *Richmond Dispatch*, April 2, 3, 1902.



ANDREW JACKSON MONTAGUE
Governor, 1902-1906

ferred only indirectly from the colored vote, who spoke of the "God-given right of suffrage" with all the fervor of the radical Republicans of the Convention of 1867; and there were delegates from the middle counties, and not a few from counties of all sections, who were determined to accomplish the purpose of the convention without resorting to methods that would be unnecessarily radical. This last group formed the majority element in that body.

"The Committee on the Elective Franchise, Qualification for Office, Basis of Representation and Apportionment, and on Elections" was composed of twenty-two members, at least two of whom were chosen from each of the Congressional districts of the State. After more than three months of hard work, this committee submitted to the convention on September 26, 1901, three reports on the elective franchise—the majority report signed by twelve of the committee, headed by Mr. Thom, of Norfolk; a minority report signed by six of the committee, headed by Senator John W. Daniel, of Campbell County; and a second minority report submitted by one member, Mr. J. C. Wysor, of Pulaski and Giles counties.¹¹

The requisites for the franchise proposed in the Thom plan were as follows: 1. The prepayment of the capitation tax of \$1.50 six months before the election, applicable after February 1, 1903; 2, residence in the State two years, in the county one year, and in the precinct, thirty days; 3, the registration of the voter as prescribed by law; 4, ability to explain the general nature of the various officers for whom the applicant may, at the time, under the laws, be entitled to vote; 5, that he should have been engaged, if physically able, for at least one-fourth of the time during the year next preceding that in which he offers to vote, in a lawful trade, profession, business, calling, work or service. In addition, further requirements were provided, to go into effect January 1, 1904, as follows: 6, that the application to register be in the ap-

¹¹*Debates of the Constitutional Convention of Virginia, 1901-1902*, pp. 599-606; 620-628.

plicant's own handwriting; 7, that the voter prepare and deposit his ballot without aid from another.

The minority report containing the Daniel plan recommended as permanent requirements for those registering to vote: 1, the ability to read any section of the state constitution which might be submitted by the registration officers, and the ability to give a reasonable interpretation of the same; 2, residence of two years in the State, one in the county or city, and thirty days in the precinct in which the application for the right to vote is made; 3, the prepayment of all capitation taxes six months before the election; 4, registration in the applicant's own handwriting without assistance, except in the case of old soldiers, and those physically incapable of doing so.¹²

The Daniel plan was amended by Mr. Carter Glass to provide for the ending of the understanding clause requirement on January 1, 1904. The Glass compromise was finally adopted by the convention on April 4, 1902, by a vote of fifty-nine to twenty.¹³ Eight Republicans voted against it, and none of them for it. Mr. Wysor, like many who voted for the Glass plan, did not favor any understanding clause, but accepted this compromise as the only possible means of effecting harmony among the various factions.¹⁴ Mr. Pollard, of Richmond, opposed these methods of disfranchisement to the last. Doctor McIlwaine, of Prince Edward, who was elected by the whites from the county that was the last to be represented in the legislature by negroes, opposed even a temporary understanding clause, as too radical, and proposed as a substitute some form of educational test for registering. He characterized the understanding and grandfather clauses as a disgrace to the State.¹⁵ Mr. Hatton of Portsmouth said, "As one of

¹²The other minority report, that of Mr. Wysor, contained no understanding clause.

¹³*Debates*, p. 2994, *Journal and Documents of Convention*, p. 487.

¹⁴*Debates*, pp. 2993-2994.

¹⁵*Debates*, p. 4496.

those delegates who opposed the understanding clause and who comes from the Black Belt, I stand here in this presence and declare my thankfulness to the Almighty that I and my colleagues from the Black Belt were endowed with the wisdom and foresight to oppose and defeat the permanent understanding clause." Although opposing both the understanding and grandfather clauses he accepted the Glass compromise for the sake of harmony.¹⁶ There were many similar expressions of opinion among those who voted for the compromise.

Article II concerning "the elective franchise and qualifications of office," provides that every male citizen of the United States twenty-one years of age, who has been a resident of the State two years, of the county, city, or town one year, and of the precinct in which he offers to vote thirty days next preceding the election, has paid his poll tax (\$1.50) six months prior to the election, and has registered, is allowed to vote.

The following could register during 1902 and 1903:

"First. A person who, prior to the adoption of this constitution, served in time of war in the army or navy of the United States or of the Confederate States; or, second, a son of any such person; or, third, a person who owns property, upon which, for the year preceding that in which he offers to register, state taxes aggregating at least one dollar have been paid; or, fourth, a person able to read any section of this constitution submitted to him by the officers of registration and to give a reasonable explanation of the same; or, if unable to read such section, able to understand and to give a reasonable explanation thereof when read to him by the officers."

Those who registered under these conditions during 1902 and 1903 remained permanently on the roll of voters, provided that they did not cease to be residents of the State or otherwise disqualify themselves.¹⁷ But after January 1, 1904,

¹⁶*Debates*, p. 3017.

¹⁷Article II, Sections 23 and 24. For complete text of Article II, see Appendix No. II.

every male citizen of the United States having the qualifications of age and residence given above could register, provided: "First, that he has personally paid to the proper officer all state poll taxes assessed or assessable against him, under this or the former constitution, for the three years next preceding that in which he offers to register; or, if he comes of age at such time that no poll tax shall have been assessable against him for the year preceding the year in which he offers to register, has paid \$1.50, in satisfaction of the first year's poll tax assessable against him; and, second, that unless physically unable, he make application to register in his own handwriting, without aid, suggestion or memorandum, in the presence of the registration officers, stating therein his name, age, date and place of birth, residence and occupation at the time and for the two years next preceding, and whether he has previously voted, and, if so, the state, county, and precinct in which he voted last; and, third, that he answer on oath any and all questions affecting his qualifications as an elector, submitted to him by the officers of registration, which questions, and his answers thereto, shall be reduced to writing, certified by the officers, and preserved as a part of their official records."

Furthermore, since January 1, 1904, only those can vote who have paid, at least six months prior to the election, all poll taxes assessed or assessable against them for three years next preceding that in which they offer to vote. Voters, registered since January 1, 1904, are also required, unless physically unable, to prepare and deposit their ballots without aid. Those registering prior to that date can receive such aid. The understanding clause and the grandfather clause were not effective after that date.

It was enacted that the General Assembly may prescribe a property qualification not exceeding \$200 for voting in any election of officers, other than the members of the General Assembly, to be elected by the voters of such county or subdivision thereof or city, or town; such action, if taken, to be

made upon the initiative of a representative in the General Assembly of the locality concerned.¹⁸

Rules governing registration were made, and registration officers in the several counties, to hold office until 1904, were appointed by the convention.¹⁹

But the suffrage question, though the most urgent was not the only problem which was presented to the convention for solution. The constitution was a lengthy one, in keeping with the custom of that day, and was burdened with detail.

The State Board of Education was enlarged to include five members in addition to the former ex-officio members. The office of state superintendent was made elective with a four-year term.

Circuit courts took the place of the county courts which had met once a month. It brought an end to the old picturesque court days, when the citizens of the country-side met to swap horses or yarns, to discuss crops and politics, and to hear the latest speeches of their political representatives, or of those who aspired to office.

The constitution showed a distrust of the legislature, but did not centralize power in the hands of the governor, since the chief heads of executive departments are by its terms elected by the people or appointed by the legislature.

Great economic changes of the two preceding decades were reflected in the constitution. About a fourth of the instrument was devoted to the regulation of large combinations of industry and transportation. A State Corporation Commission took the place of the old Board of Public Works established in 1816, and reorganized from time to time, and of the Railroad Commissioner, whose office was created in 1877.

Fully a third of the constitution is devoted to the detailed provisions governing the nature and duties of the State Corporation Commission. It was placed as far as possible be-

¹⁸Article II, Section 30.

¹⁹*Journal and Documents of the Constitutional Convention of Virginia, 1901-1902.*

yond the reach of partisan politics, and its permanence and independence were assured. The commission, which was formally organized on May 2, 1903, has legislative, judicial, and executive functions. "It creates, regulates and supervises all domestic corporations, except municipal corporations and institutions owned by the State; and it regulates and supervises all foreign corporations permitted to do business in the State." It has all the characteristics and functions of a court, and, in fact, it is a court. The Corporation Commission, during its quarter century of existence, had widened its range of usefulness and has amply justified its creation.

The development of transportation and industry together with the lack of economic and social advantages of the rural districts had caused the urban population of the State to increase from eleven per cent of the total, in 1880, to sixteen and one-half in 1900. As the result, Virginia, for the first time, made constitutional provision for her cities.

The debate on the question as to whether the constitution should be submitted to the approval of the people, or proclaimed by the convention, was one of the longest and most earnest of the session. Some advocated its submission to the electorate provided for in the constitution. This would obviously have been little more than proclamation under another guise. To submit the constitution to the electorate as then constituted, on the other hand, would have meant a bitter and expensive campaign, and it might have meant even the defeat of the constitution, and the return to the undesirable situation of former years. It was finally decided, on May 29, 1902, by a majority of 48 to 38 to proclaim the constitution.

The constitution was signed by all the Democratic members, except those who were unable to be present. Only two of the twelve Republican delegates were willing to put their signatures to the instrument. The Republican members of the convention voted in matters of representation and suffrage almost solidly against any changes in the Constitution of 1868, as it then existed. Their attitude towards negro suf-



CLAUDE R. SWANSON
Governor, 1906-1910

frage was in keeping with the traditions of the Republican party in Virginia, and with the national Republican platform of 1900, which said, "It was the plain purpose of the Fifteenth Amendment of the Constitution to prevent discrimination on account of race or color in regulating the elective franchise. The devices of such [state] governments, ordered by statutory or constitutional enactment, are revolutionary and should be condemned."²⁰

The new constitution of Virginia was remarkably conservative in view of the conditions that had existed in the State. Its reception at the hands of the public in the North shows a marked change in the attitude of that section towards the struggle of the Southern States to solve their great problem. But there were still some voices raised in protest. *The Nation* called it a "monstrous constitution." "The most preposterous questions," it said, "which no constitutional lawyer of eminence could answer off-hand, have been asked of negro citizens of means, probity, and standing, when they have sought to exercise the right of suffrage conferred upon them by the Congress and the people of the United States."²¹ The fallacy and injustice of this statement is obvious. No man fulfilling the common requirement of age and residence, who had about \$300 worth of property upon which he paid taxes (that is, upon which state taxes aggregating at least one dollar had been paid), was required to interpret the constitution or was prevented from voting if he paid his poll tax, whether he were white or black. And the grandfather and understanding clauses were in force only eighteen months.

On the other hand, the *Review of Reviews* said, "The best and wisest friends of the negro race are not worrying themselves at all about new Southern franchise laws. No Southern state has made provisions which exclude the negro of intelligence and property."²²

²⁰Republican platform, 1900.

²¹*The Nation*, December 25, 1902 (lxxv; 496).

²²*Review of Reviews*, May, 1902 (xxv, 533); see also the *Outlook*, June 13, 1903 (lxxiv, 399 and lxxv, 493, 984).

The changed attitude of thoughtful people in other parts of the country towards this legislation was due to a better understanding of the problem facing the South, and to more cordial relations between the different sections. They had come to realize that these laws were necessary for the existence of public order, of decent and intelligent government, upon which the welfare of the colored people themselves depended.

Fortunately, the negroes of America had at this time as their leader, Booker T. Washington, of Virginia, a man whose intellect, zeal, and tact, won him the respect and admiration of men of both races and of all sections. He came into prominence at the time when the negroes were being eliminated from politics by legal methods in one Southern state after another. He did much to acquaint the North with the real conditions and needs of his people in the South, to show the South the negro point of view, and to teach his people a new doctrine, which most of their former leaders had ignored. He urged that they should first make themselves fit citizens before clamoring for the full privileges of citizenship; that material prosperity and moral worth were essential for their true enlightenment and power; and that practical, moral, and manual training was what they most needed. "In my mind," he wrote in 1901, "there is no doubt but that we made a mistake at the beginning of our freedom of putting the emphasis on the wrong end. Politics and the holding of office were too largely emphasized, almost to the exclusion of every other interest."²³

²³Booker T. Washington, *The Future of the American Negro*, p. 130.

CHAPTER XV

PROHIBITION AND OTHER ISSUES

The removal of the race question from politics has brought to the front other political issues during the twenty years that followed. Referendums have been held and campaigns have been waged on such questions as better schools, prohibition, tax reform, the budget, improved city government, and good roads. Although the Democratic party has no appreciable opposition except in the Southwest, hard fought campaigns have developed in the primary elections, and when issues were met in referendums. Although, in state politics, Virginia lacks the stimulus which comes from the struggle between rival parties, it is saved from partisan bias which is often a curse in party politics. Questions have been decided on their merits and not along lines of party expediency.

The first candidate to be elected by popular vote as Superintendent of Public Instruction was Joseph Dupuy Eggleston, of Prince Edward County. His aggressive campaign gave further impetus to the revival of interest in education which was already under way.

Perhaps the most important general issue during these years has been prohibition. Temperance had been a moral issue before the war of 1861; and had it not been for that event it would, doubtless, have appeared in politics long before it did. Temperance societies were organized in Virginia fully a generation before 1860, and the Sons of Temperance was an active organization of ante-bellum days. Scores of petitions advocating legal restrictions on the liquor traffic were sent the legislature.

The chief temperance advocate in those days was Lucian

Minor, a native of Louisa County, Virginia, who devoted the last twelve to fifteen years of his life to the cause. He was an earnest, fluent, and convincing speaker. His gifted style and his ability to array useful statistics in behalf of his arguments opened to him the columns of newspapers which would have ignored a less capable and influential author. His pamphlet entitled "Reasons for Abolishing the Liquor Traffic," published in 1853, was considered by the *Southern Literary Messenger*¹ to be "by far the ablest production on the subject which has anywhere appeared." He was not radical in his temperance views, however. A man might keep whiskey in his house, he thought, for his own use, or for the purpose of treating his friends. His chief attacks were against the evils of the liquor traffic. The following extracts from this pamphlet give² some idea of the force of his arguments: "It is the great duty of society to protect itself and its people against wrong and evil, whether coming by violence, or fraud, or pernicious and corrupting allurements. * * * No sane man ever deemed such a protecting law invasive of individual right, or freedom, because no sane man ever deemed freedom to be the right of doing mischief with impunity. * * * He [the citizen] is not a free agent. * * * the law so earnestly aims to prevent the beginnings of evil (*obstare principiis*) that it will not let me, or any of you play a game of whist, *vingt-un*, loo, or *solitaire*, at a hotel or racefield, *even without betting*. * * * There is no hope of arresting this mighty tide of evil but by prohibition. Moral suasion, addressed to the dealers, has utterly failed. * * * Legal suasion offers the sole hope of inducing those to quit their quest of gain, with whom dollars and cents outweigh all the promptings of public spirit, kindness, and justice. * * * Every dollar he [the liquor dealer] receives instead of testi-

¹For a brief account of Minor, see Vol. XXVII, pp. 225-227 (September, 1858).

²*Reasons for Abolishing the Liquor Traffic, Addressed to the People of Virginia*. Richmond, 1853.

fyng to the good he has done, is a memorial to the mischief he has spread around him. * * * His coin should be inscribed, 'This quarter of a dollar certifies that the bearer has made a man beat his wife,' 'This nine-pence witnesses that its owner caused a poor man to lie down by the wayside in a winter night and freeze to death,' 'This dollar is a memorial of seven days and nights of wretchedness, which were given to a whole family in exchange for it,' 'This bag of money certifies that the owner has sent two of his neighbors to jail, and their wives and children to the poor-house,' 'The bearer hereof caused a man to be murdered; for which the murderer is in the penitentiary.' ''³

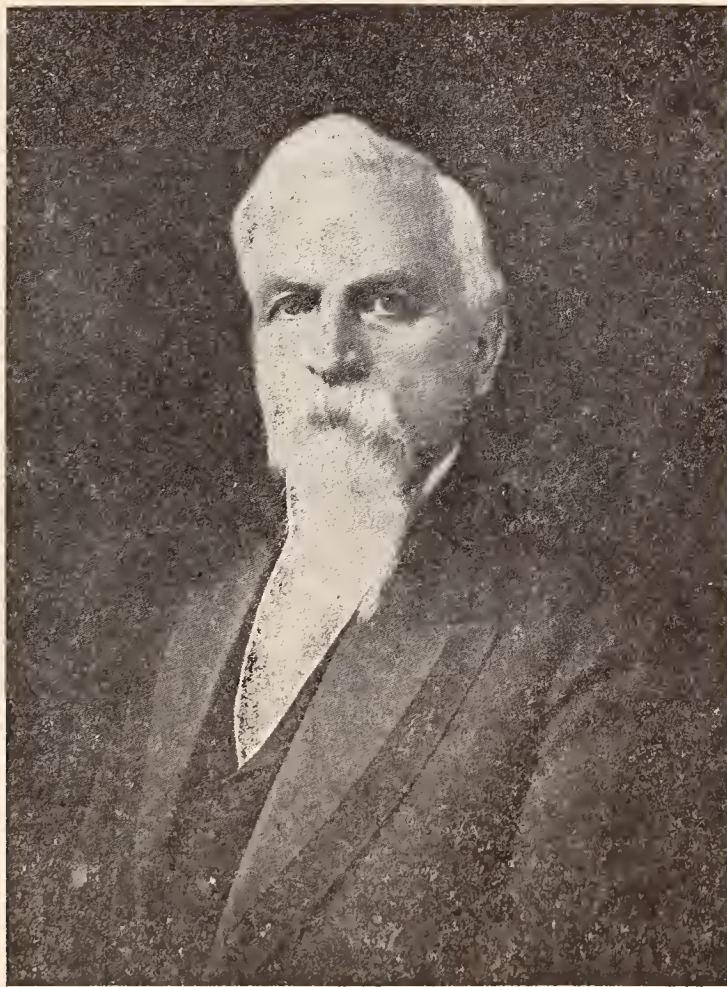
Until local option undermined the liquor traffic, practically every cross-roads store dispensed its full quota of ardent spirits. It was not unusual for a small town or village to possess several saloons which were often located on principal corner lots. They did a flourishing business, especially on Saturday afternoons, when white and colored alike came to town to buy provisions from the local stores and to get the mail. Whiskey circulated throughout the State by the thousands of tons. According to the Federal statistics of 1885, 2,946 tons of liquors were carried over the Norfolk & Western Railroad during that year, and 14,753 tons over the Chesapeake & Ohio in Virginia. The Richmond & Petersburg Railroad carried 1,337 barrels, and the other railroads of the State carried their share of intoxicating freight.

In 1900, after the tide had begun to turn, there were licensed by the State 59 wholesale dealers of liquor, and 31 of malt liquors; 43 manufacturers of liquor, 399 of brandy, and 9 malt liquors; 1,795 retail dealers of liquor, and one of malt liquors.⁴

Public opinion in Virginia was slow in attacking the liquor traffic. The people of the State had long looked upon whis-

³Lucian Minor, at the time of his death in 1858, was professor of law at the College of William and Mary. He was buried on the college campus.

⁴*Documents of the Convention of 1901-1902*, Doc. No. 10.



Wm Hodges Mann

Governor, 1910-1914

key as a necessary equipment of both the medicine-cabinet, and the sideboard. And Virginians were not alone in this opinion. Furthermore, they hesitated, as usual, to extend government control over fields which are social in their nature.

In 1886, the General Assembly provided for local option in regard to the sale of liquor in magisterial districts, counties, towns, and cities. The Mann Law of 1904, and the Byrd-Mann Law of 1908 strengthened prohibition in local areas. Judge William Hodges Mann, one of the leading advocates of prohibition, became governor of the state in 1910. In that year, state-wide prohibition became an issue. But an enabling act for a referendum on the subject was defeated in the Assembly. Two years later, a similar bill passed the House and was defeated in the Senate. In 1914, the bill was passed by a large majority in the House, and was accepted by the Senate through the deciding vote of the chairman, Lieutenant-Governor J. Taylor Ellyson. In that year prohibition obtained in 71 of the 100 counties, in 16 of the 20 cities, and in nearly all incorporated towns. In the election held on September 22, 1914, there were 94,251 votes for, and 63,886 against, state-wide prohibition. The legislature accordingly passed a stringent prohibition law, which went into effect on November 1, 1916. The Assembly appointed as Commissioner of Prohibition the secretary of the Anti-Saloon League.⁵

When the Eighteenth Amendment was submitted to the legislature for its consideration, the State was already legally dry. The amendment was ratified in January, 1918, in the House by a vote of eighty-four to thirteen, and in the Senate by a vote of thirty to eight. Virginia was the second state of the Union to approve the amendment. Although there are today many who claim that prohibition was some-

⁵The Anti-Saloon League of Virginia was organized in 1901. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the church organizations were other organized bodies who advocated prohibition.

how presented to the majority against their will, and although officers are hunting the elusive stills at all seasons, prohibition, in Virginia at least, was the result of constant and increasing moral and economic pressure exerted through many years.

Taxation has always been one of the most difficult problems of government. In 1910, the General Assembly appointed a tax commission to investigate the existing tax laws and their enforcement and to recommend reforms. Mr. Douglas S. Freeman, of Richmond, was made expert member and secretary of the commission. The commission's report of 1911 was the first extensive report on taxation, in Virginia. Among the changes considered "absolutely essential" was the appointment of a tax commission. On March 24, 1914, the legislature named a Joint Committee on Tax Revision. This committee pointed out the great inequalities which existed, and proposed a number of reforms. "We are convinced," said the committee, "that the injustice now arising from unequal assessments cannot be ended except by some agency to support and guide assessors and commissioners of the revenue in their work. It is intolerable that a small landholder in Brunswick should be taxed six times as heavily as a large landholder in Henrico. Something must be done to assist the local officials to do their work properly, and relieve them from the terrible pressure that now hampers their efficiency. Such aid and relief can come only from a State Tax Commission."⁶

The state debt question which had long been a factor in Virginia politics and which had been settled as far as politicians and the creditors of Virginia were concerned, now arose in a new form. For twelve years, from 1906 to 1918, it was the occasion of nine suits in the Supreme Court of the

⁶*Report of the Joint Committee on Tax Revision, 1914.* This commission had the expert assistance of Dr. Thomas Walker Page, then of the University of Virginia.



HENRY C. STUART
Governor, 1914-1918

United States between the Commonwealth of Virginia and the State of West Virginia.⁷

As early as 1866, the Virginia Assembly had appointed commissioners to secure the reunion of West Virginia with Virginia if possible, and if not, to adjust the debt question. This and other attempts failed.

In the Funding Act of 1871, Virginia was released by the bondholders from all responsibility for one-third of the certificates which were to be paid in accordance with the settlement which the State should make with West Virginia. In 1900, the State of Virginia made an arrangement with the bondholders whereby they should give a commission control of their certificates with the understanding that the bondholders would accept what West Virginia should finally pay, whether it be a third or less.

The following resolution passed by the legislature of West Virginia in 1905 is typical of resolutions passed annually since 1860: "That the State of West Virginia does not owe any part of the so-called Virginia debt, and that this legislature is opposed to any negotiations whatever on the subject." In 1906, Virginia initiated the first of the series of cases, and the decision was rendered in 1907. After five other litigations, the case again came before the court, and in 1915, a decision was rendered which was thought to be final. Mr. Justice Hughes gave the opinion which met with the unanimous approval of the Court. According to this opinion, West Virginia's share of the debt was placed at \$12,393,929.50.

West Virginia failed, however, to comply with the judgment, and in 1916, Virginia, through its attorney general, John Garland Pollard, submitted a motion for a writ of execution against the State of West Virginia. The Court denied

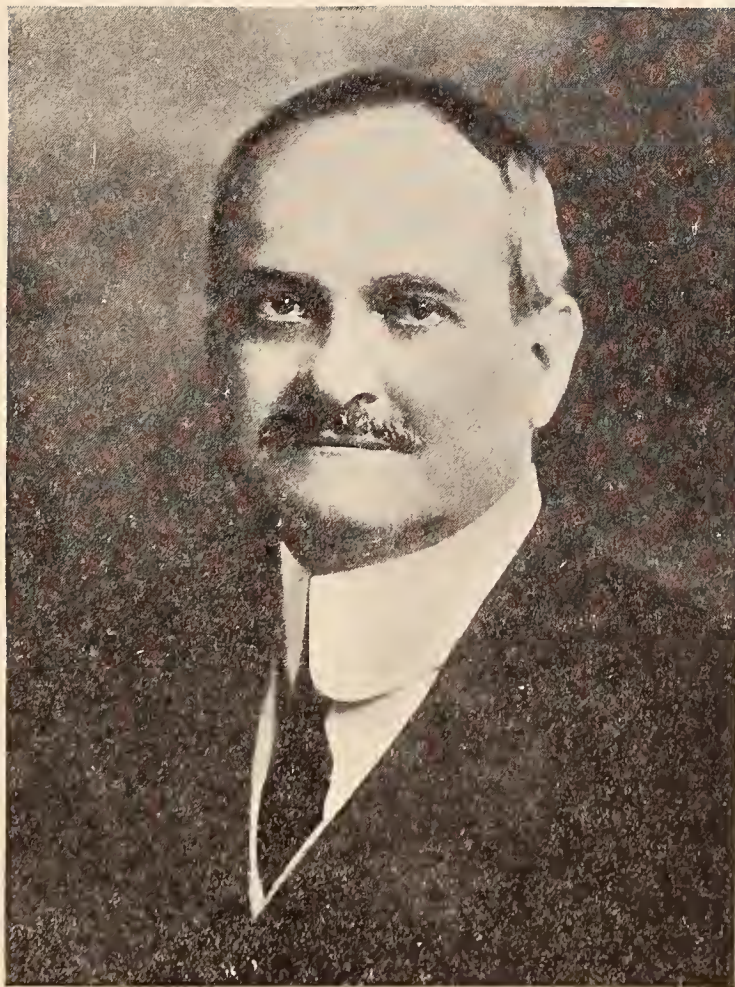
⁷Virginia had brought West Virginia into court once before, in 1870, to prevent her from retaining Jefferson and Berkeley counties (11 Wallace 39). James Brown Scott, *Judicial Settlement of Controversies between States of the American Union*, publications of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Oxford, 1919.

the petition because the legislature of West Virginia had not met in regular session since the decision had been rendered, and had not, therefore, had the opportunity of abiding by the Court's decision. After this the legislature met and adjourned without making adequate provision.

Again West Virginia was called before the Court to show cause why its legislature should not be *mandamus*ed to impose a tax to meet its just obligations. In its final decision, rendered in 1918, the Supreme Court held that the State of West Virginia could be compelled "to discharge a plain duty resting upon it under the constitution." The Court, however, speaking through Mr. Chief Justice White, stated that they would refrain from action "in order that full opportunity may be afforded to Congress to exercise the power which it undoubtedly possesses" of coercing the State if necessary. There was no precedent in constitutional or in international law to force West Virginia to comply with the judgment of the Supreme Court. There was much speculation as to what would happen if West Virginia continued in her disobedient ways. Virginia was preparing to renew the fight when her daughter had a change of heart and obeyed the Court's decree. The ante-bellum debt question with which the State had contended for a full half century was at last successfully and finally buried.

The progress of the state government along the lines of social reform, and of a needful paternalism, is shown by the number of new agencies which have been created during the last two decades to insure to the citizens the blessings of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. There are today separate agencies. Among them are the Board of Charities and Correction, a Commissioner of Labor, the Health Commissioner, and the Dairy and Food Commissioner.

In 1918, Mr. Westmoreland Davis became governor of Virginia on a platform of increased administrative efficiency and fiscal reforms. His great achievement was the successful introduction of the budget system. It was an interesting and



WESTMORELAND DAVIS
Governor, 1918-1922

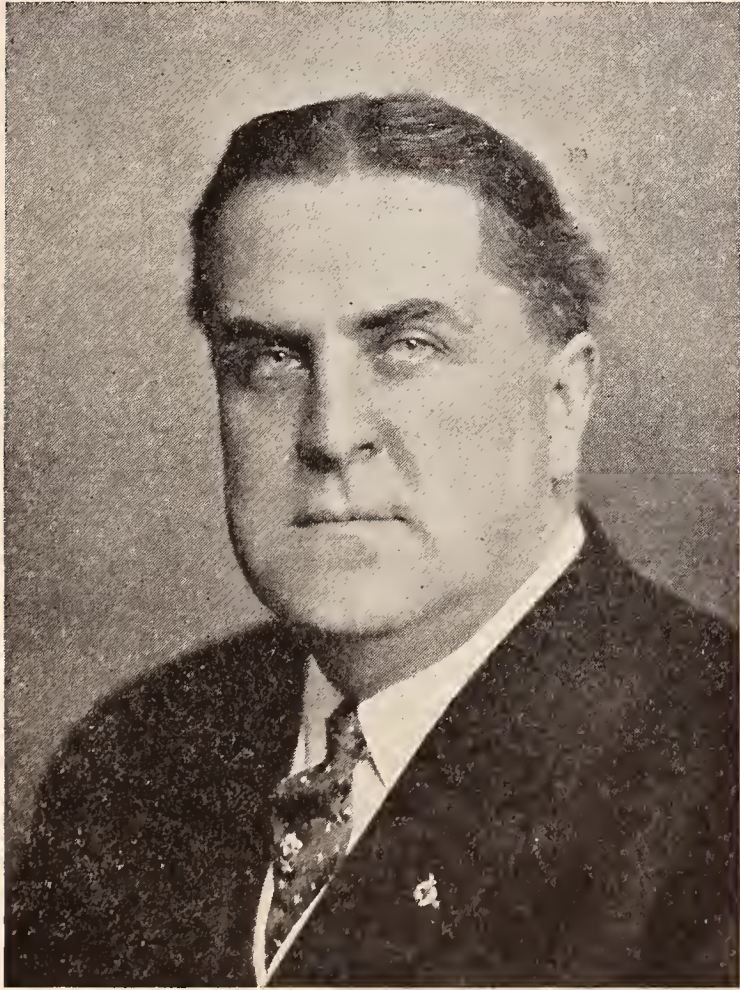
somewhat amusing fact that the legislature which enacted Virginia's first budget law showed the necessity for such action by appropriating an amount for the next two years which would have exceeded the revenue by about \$3,000,000. The Governor refused to accept the appropriation bill, and called in conference the leaders in the Assembly. The appropriations were judiciously cut and provision was made for more revenue. It would be difficult for such a situation to arise under the present system.

Although the many new commissions and other agencies of government have resulted in much good, they have been added from time to time without readjusting the former machinery of government. This has caused additional decentralization, and duplication of functions which has resulted in useless waste and lost motion.

The Assembly, in 1922, provided for the appointment of a committee on simplification of the state government.

In city government, a revolution has occurred since 1908, when Staunton inaugurated the first government by city manager in the United States. A civil engineer of Richmond, Virginia, Charles B. Ashburner, was made general manager of that city, and was given most of the administrative duties of the old mayor and council, who were retained. Under this plan of government, the general direction and policies of the city are vested in a small council or commission, who choose a city manager, in whom the chief administrative functions are concentrated. Although only a few cities of more than 100,000—Norfolk (Virginia), Dayton (Ohio), and others—have adopted the system, it has developed rapidly among the smaller cities and has been most successful. There are now (1923) 23 cities in Virginia and 311 cities in the United States operating under the city manager plan. Professional city managers are employed strictly on the merit basis.⁸

⁸For a description of Staunton's government, see S. D. Holsinger, "Twelve Years of City Management in Staunton," *Ninth Yearbook of the City Managers' Association*, 1923. The city-manager form of government has much in common with the commission form adopted for the first time by Galveston, Texas, in 1901.



E. LEE TRINKLE
Governor, 1922-1926

Since 1900, the advent of the automobile as a common means of travel has given new impetus to the movement for good roads. On March 6, 1906, the General Assembly created a State Highway Commission. A State Highway System was mapped out by the legislature, connecting cities, towns, and courthouses of the State, and the county supervisors were requested to indicate and develop the main county roads and to connect them with the state highway system. Approximately 12,000 miles of highways have been included in county "feeder" roads. The Highway Commission was authorized to add annually to the state system not more than two and one-half per cent of its mileage. In this way the State set out to improve its 55,000 miles of public roads.

In order to secure funds, and to encourage local effort, the Assembly in 1919 enacted the Robertson law which provides, "That if any county or district, or private corporation, or person, desires to immediately improve any section of the State Highway System, within any county, which has been designated as a part of the State Highway System, the State Highway Commission may enter into an agreement with said county officials or other parties, to finance the construction, or reconstruction, of said highways, or section thereof; provided, however, that the funds so advanced shall be without interest. Provided, further, that the commission shall be authorized to make repayment to said counties, or other parties, annually as the funds are available, and are apportioned for such construction or reconstruction, until the amount so advanced has been repaid."

But sufficient funds were not available. The memories of Readjuster days were so painfully vivid in the minds of the authors of the Virginia Constitution of 1902, that they embodied in that document a prohibition of the creation of any debt by the State "except to meet casual deficits in the revenue, to redeem a previous liability of the State, to suppress insurrection, repel invasion, or defend the State in time of war."

This restriction, as far as it applied to a debt incurred in road building, was repealed by popular referendum in November, 1920. The General Assembly was given the right to issue bonds for that purpose.

Since 1916, the State has received annual grants from the United States Government under the Federal Aid Road Act of Congress of that year. There is no provision for aid from this source, however, after 1924.

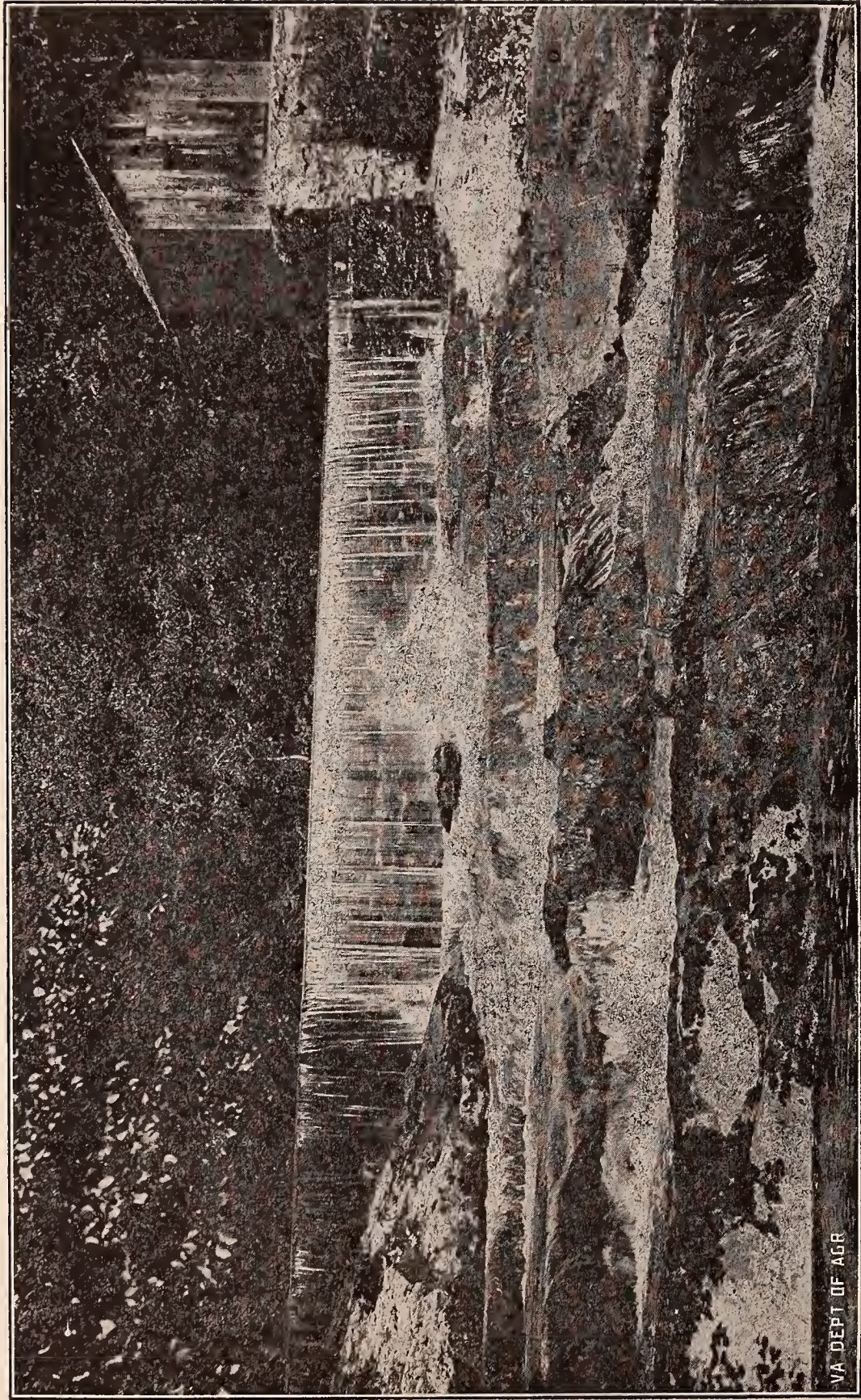
The State Highway Commission was reorganized by Act of March 24, 1922. At that time a heated debate occurred on the question of issuing bonds to complete the 4,350 miles of the present highway system. The Assembly did not reach a final conclusion on this question but passed a law providing a one mill tax and a three cent gas tax for road construction.

On February 28, 1923, Governor Trinkle called the General Assembly in special session to consider the matter. This Assembly referred to the people the question of a \$50,000,000 bond issue and a two cent gas tax. In the referendum election on the subject held in November, 1923, the bond issue was defeated by a large majority.

Of the 4,350 miles of the State Highway, there are now completed or under construction 260 miles of concrete, 687 miles of macadam, 238 miles of gravel, 428 miles of sand clay and soil, and 152 miles of miscellaneous construction.

The people of Virginia have committed themselves to a definite program of good roads regardless of what methods they may use in securing the funds. They are convinced that Virginia cannot come into her own until she ceases to be the no-man's land of those that travel.

The problems thus briefly described, which have arisen since 1900, show only that part of the State's activity in social and economic relationships which have become political issues. The state government has quietly assumed many new responsibilities in order to meet the problems of a new age.



WATER POWER, ALLEGHANY COUNTY

CHAPTER XVI

SOME SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS IN THE REBUILDING OF THE OLD DOMINION

The Old Dominion of 1860 has passed into the realm of legend. Already romance has adopted it for her own and has woven about it a shadowy and unreal atmosphere of lavender, old lace, and hoopskirts, mint-juleps, duelling pistols, and blooded horses. The passing of the old regime and the grinding years of suffering, toil and poverty, which came in its stead, made the people look back to the days before the war as the golden age. Every man was the possessor of many acres worked by many servants—a gentleman and a scholar and withal a judge of good whiskey. Every woman was a lady fair, a queen who ruled her domain with grace and charm. The authors who created them have exaggerated those virtues and those vices which they most admired until a type has appeared which cannot be found in history. Character has been replaced by caricature. This romantic presentation has brought a reaction among later writers, some of whom have gone so far as to deny the charm and romance which rightly belongs to that period. They are even more in error.

The Virginians of 1860 were very much like their descendants of 1820; but they lived in a different world. They were not all large landholders with many servants. In 1860 there were 52,128 slave holders in Virginia (including West Virginia) out of a white population of 1,047,299. "Of the 52,128 slave holders in Virginia" according to a recent historian, "one-third held but one or two slaves; half held one to four; there were but one hundred and fourteen persons in the whole

State who owned as many as a hundred each, and this out of a population of over a million whites.”¹

Mr. Beverley B. Munford adds, “By this same census the area of Virginia was fixed at 64,770 square miles, divided into 148 counties. By an analysis of the census returns, it will appear that, in the portion of the State lying west of the Blue Ridge Mountains, embracing eighty counties and 37,992 square miles, there were 596,293 whites and only 66,766 slaves; while in the remaining sixty-eight counties containing 26,778 square miles, there were only 451,006 whites and 424,099 slaves. Even with respect to this last mentioned portion of the State the slaves were not evenly distributed but were congested in certain well defined localities. Thus of the 424,099 slaves in the sixty-eight counties lying each of the Blue Ridge, 173,109 were in twenty-two counties situated between James River and the North Carolina border known as the “Black Belt,” the white population of which was only 128,303.”²

There was no “slave-holding class” in Virginia as distinguished from a “non-slave-holding class.” It is as incorrect to make such a division of Virginia society in 1860 as it would be to divide present society into “houseowning” and “non-houseowning” classes, or into “automobileowning” and “non-automobileowning” classes. A man—whatever his social standing—who had sufficient money or credit, might buy a slave. The possession of that slave added not one cubit to his social stature.

The planters were not, as a rule, men of large fortunes, nor did they live in mansions like Westover and Brandon, although there were not a few large and well-built homes throughout the Commonwealth which testified to their owners’ good taste and large families. Their furniture was simple, but made on good lines, and almost every family which was acquainted with its ancestors owned some old pieces, of which it was justly proud. Most of the homes of the best families were simple but

¹Chadwick, *Causes of the Civil War*. (American Nation) p. 33.

²Munford, *Virginia’s Attitude Towards Slavery and Secession*, p. 126.

substantial frame buildings, with the hall in the center and rooms on each side. As the family increased in size, so did the house. This rambling characteristic often added to the charm of the houses but not to their convenience. The owners of these homes lived frugally and simply. But they read good books and sent their sons to college and their daughters to the "seminaries." There was no aristocracy based on wealth, although wealth was and always has been one of the foundations for aristocracy.

There were, however, many families, which, for generations, had kept a standard of decent living and culture. They formed an aristocracy based on culture and good breeding. But there was no caste between to prevent the inclusion in this group of those who proved themselves worthy. Merit had its due recognition. As the children grew up, some stayed on the farms, some went into professions, and others left the State to win their fortunes. In 1860, nearly 400,000 Virginians were living in other commonwealths. They had sufficient leisure to cultivate the social graces. There were many house parties, dances, and picnics. Both men and women rode behind the hounds in the fox-hunts.

Although often pictured as devil-may-care and even profane, they were, as a rule, God-fearing, church-going, and Sabbath-keeping people. Of course, there were many—as there always have been—who trod the "primrose way;" but even these never doubted the inspiration of the Scriptures and were reverent at heart in religious matters.

Virginians had a code of morals and of honor which was often misunderstood. They owned slaves; but justified slavery by Scripture and by the belief that it was the only solution of the race question. And it should not be forgotten that their attitude was that of the whole country a generation earlier. They were not enthusiastic on the subject of temperance. Temperance became a great moral issue only after towns began to develop and when certain elements in society needed to

be restrained. Virginia was slow in developing an urgent need for regulating the liquor traffic.³

Whatever their faults, the men of Virginia were jealous of their honor as gentlemen and of the stainless name of their women. It was dishonorable to play unfairly the game of life. They had to be honest even when they sinned. If a man drank, he must drink in moderation, and in the spirit of good fellowship. If he gambled, he must not take unfair advantage. In other words, he gambled honestly. If he were indiscreet in his relations with women, he went without the charmed circle of his own group. If he proved that he could not be trusted—if he cheated, or stole, or lied, or harmed a woman's reputation—he became a social outcast. This honor code is reflected in the honor "systems" of the colleges and universities of the Commonwealth today, and its influence still permeates society.

Out of an old conception of a man's obligation to defend the good name of himself and his friends the institution of duelling arose. Duelling soon died out in the North after the killing of Alexander Hamilton. But "affairs of honor" were frequent in the South until after the War of Secession. In 1853, Lucian Minor, speaking of the Virginia anti-duelling law of 1809, says that it had proven extraordinarily successful "in putting an end to that absurd mode of 'gentlemenly satisfaction'."⁴

But duels continued and greatly increased in number after the war. Those who had participated in duels or who had borne challenges were barred from holding office. But for several years each legislature removed these political disabilities. Many prominent citizens were involved in duelling in one way or another during this period.⁵ There was so much opposition to duelling before 1880, however, that would-be duellists were forced to play hide-and-seek with the officers

³Edward Channing, *History of the United States*. Vol. V. ch vi. New York, 1921. An interesting account of the early temperance movement elsewhere.

⁴Minor, *Reasons for Abolishing the Liquor Traffic*.

⁵William L. Royall, *Some Reminiscences*.

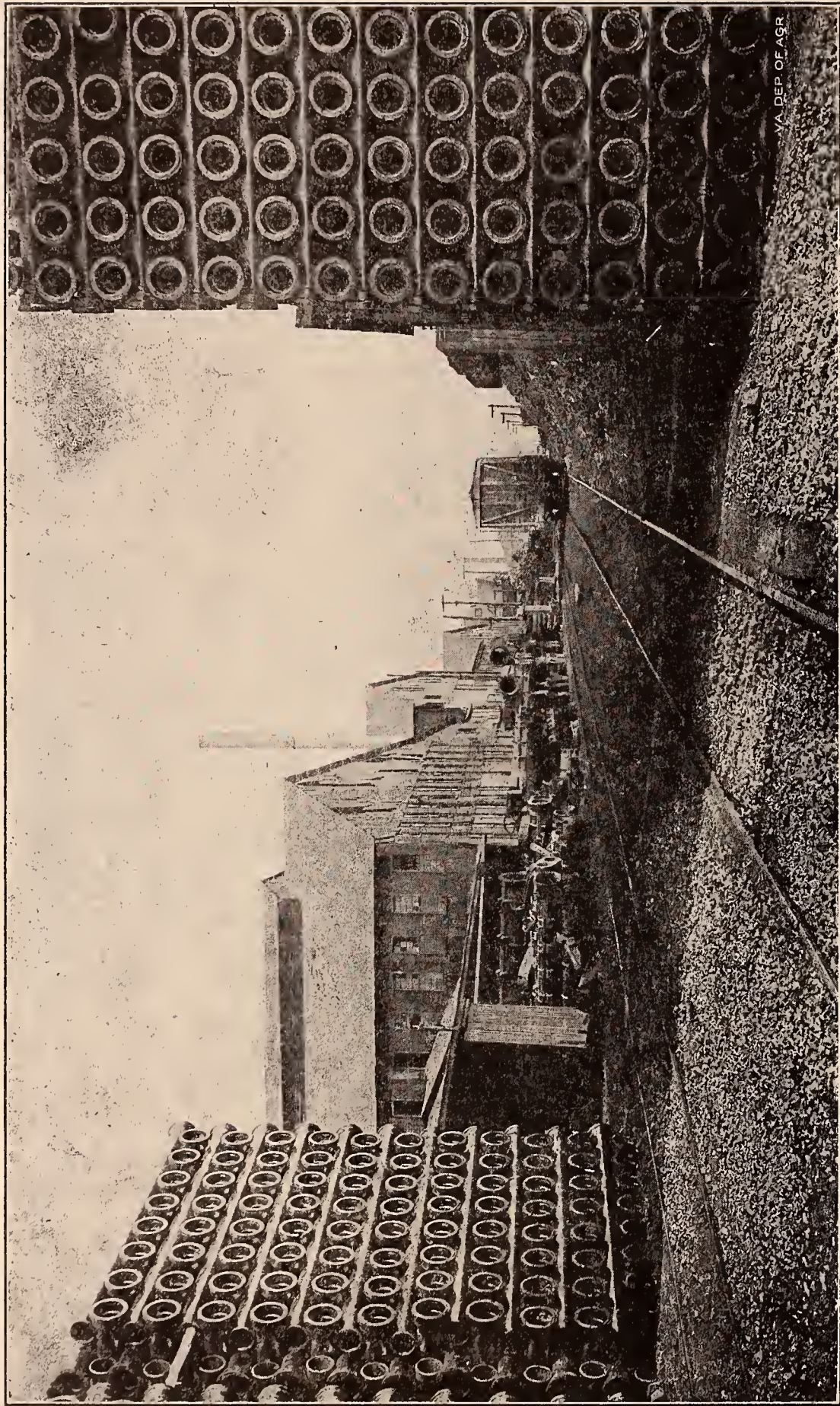
of the law, and sometimes all parties were arrested. Affairs which might have finished tragically, thus came to a laughable end.

The last duel was fought in Virginia in 1880 between W. C. Elam, editor of the *Whig*, and Col. Thomas Smith, son of Ex-Governor William Smith. Mr. Elam had written an editorial in the *Whig*, Mahone's organ during the Readjuster period, on "Political Pirates," which reflected discredit upon Colonel Smith's father and others. Failing to secure a satisfactory explanation from Mr. Elam, Colonel Smith challenged him for a duel. The principals, their seconds, and surgeons met at six o'clock in the morning of June 6, 1880, on the bank of a creek back of Oakwood Cemetery in Richmond. They took their places twelve paces apart and both fired. Colonel Smith was not hit, but Elam was struck in the chin. After Elam had fallen, Smith told him that he regretted having shot him, to which Elam replied that he had rather receive a wound than to give one. Elam's wound, fortunately was not fatal. John S. Wise challenged Dr. George Ben Johnston the same year. But both were arrested and put under a \$5,000 bond.⁶ A number of such incidents occurred during the next few years, with similar endings.

Politics and love for office were perhaps over emphasized in the life of the people. But it resulted in the choice of able office holders and in honest government. The great stress on politics may well have resulted from the worthy records of such men as Washington, Madison, Jefferson, Marshall, Monroe, and other founders of the Republic, who cast a halo about political affairs in strong contrast to the sordid atmosphere of the politics of the seventies and eighties.

The twenty years following the end of the war in 1865 brought great changes in social and economic conditions in the Commonwealth. These years of humiliation, political strife,

⁶W. Ashury Christian, *Richmond, Her Past and Present*. Richmond, Virginia, 1912, p. 366.



VA DEP OF AGR

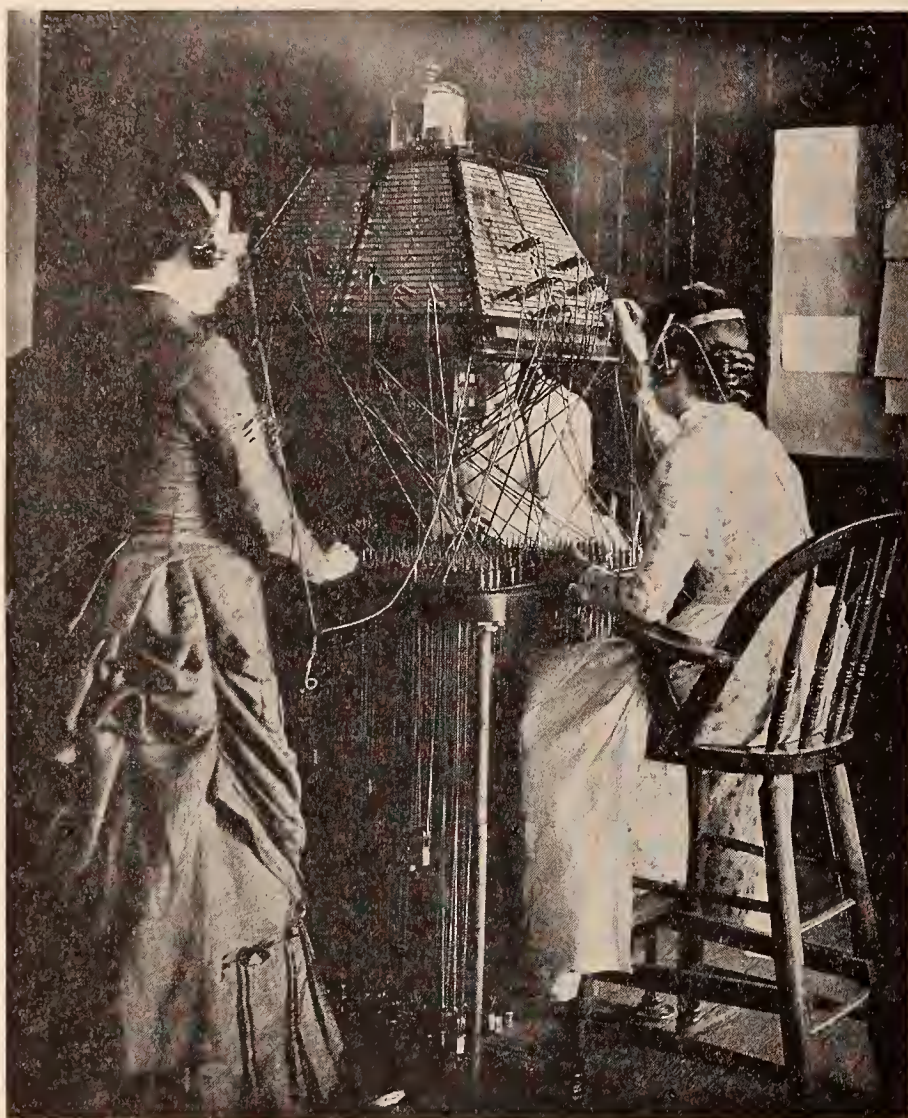
PIPE FOUNDRY, LYNCHBURG

bitterness, and poverty can hardly be imagined today. Many of those who lived during that period shortened their days through toil and cares. They sacrificed themselves for the next generation. A prominent citizen of Prince Edward County wrote to his brother in February, 1877, "Our people are today much poorer than they were at the close of the war. You could not fail to be exceedingly distressed were you to ride over our country and see the condition of the farms.

* * * Our lands have so far declined in value that a short time ago F——R——'s fine farm (his home place) of 1,500 acres, with excellent dwelling house and improvements, was sold for less than \$2,000." Almost four years later, in December, 1880, he wrote, "Times are harder in this country than they have ever been known to be by the oldest inhabitant. Our people are 50 per cent poorer than they were at the close of the war. Among your acquaintances I can enumerate many who, at the close of the war, were in prosperous circumstances, some of them wealthy; who now live from hand to mouth, you might say on the verge of starvation. These are a few of them, T— T—, F— R—, A— V—, J— D—, J— K—, (not as poor as the others but living upon his salary), D— P—, C— P—, C— C—, C— R—, E— R—, J— A — R—; and poor Captain P— has lately failed again and conveyed his property to his creditors; also H— C—, J— L—, etc., etc. All of these men are utterly insolvent."

The struggle which these men and women made to adjust themselves to new conditions, to make a living, and at the same time send their children to school and to keep a decent standard of life was heartrending. Gen. J. D. Imboden, of Richmond, wrote in 1886, "To those of us who passed through that period [after the war] it appeared that the people, when they again entered upon the 'battle of life,' required to be sustained by a sublimer courage to rise from their prostrate

⁷Capt. Richard H. Watkins to N. V. Watkins. Letter of February 24, 1877, in possession of the author.



RICHMOND TELEPHONE EXCHANGE, 1885

condition than they had shown even in following Lee and Jackson on the bloodiest fields of the war.”⁸

The war and its aftermath brought an economic and social revolution. In many cases farms were deserted by their owners, who moved to the cities or out of the State. The large farms were often broken into smaller ones. White and colored renters appeared. The exodus of former owners and the cheapness of land enabled many who had only small amounts of land to improve their condition. It called into manufacturing and other business men who would have remained on the plantation. It not only changed the social customs and conditions in the country but also aided in the growth of towns and cities. Among the many social changes which resulted in great part from new conditions was the changed status of women.

Women in Virginia were educated as well as the men, but they were not trained for any profession or trade. They were taught to entertain and to charm—and they learned their lesson well. Their chief occupation was housekeeping. The maiden sisters who did not choose that profession often taught their sisters' children or helped with the housekeeping. Sometimes they taught school. Women's sphere was very limited. They took no part in politics and only a very few engaged in business. Even teaching in the public schools was at first a man's occupation. Some few women kept boarders, and when they did, their “boarding house” was in fact a “boarding home,” and the landladies were true hostesses.

Within the last twenty-five years the status of women has been revolutionized. In matters of dress they are more sensible but equally charming. During this period they began to ride horseback astride in divided skirts. It was most shocking to many. Now, if they please, they may dress in knickerbockers, bob their hair and drive their automobiles at higher speed

⁸Treasury Department *Report on the Internal Commerce of the United States*, (Washington, 1886), p. 202. Report on Virginia by Gen. J. D. Imboden. Designated hereafter as “Imboden's Report.”

than that of the passenger train of their grandmothers' day without causing any disturbance. They may vote and hold office, raise their voices in public, conduct business and enter the professions. In 1923, women—two of them—were elected to the General Assembly.

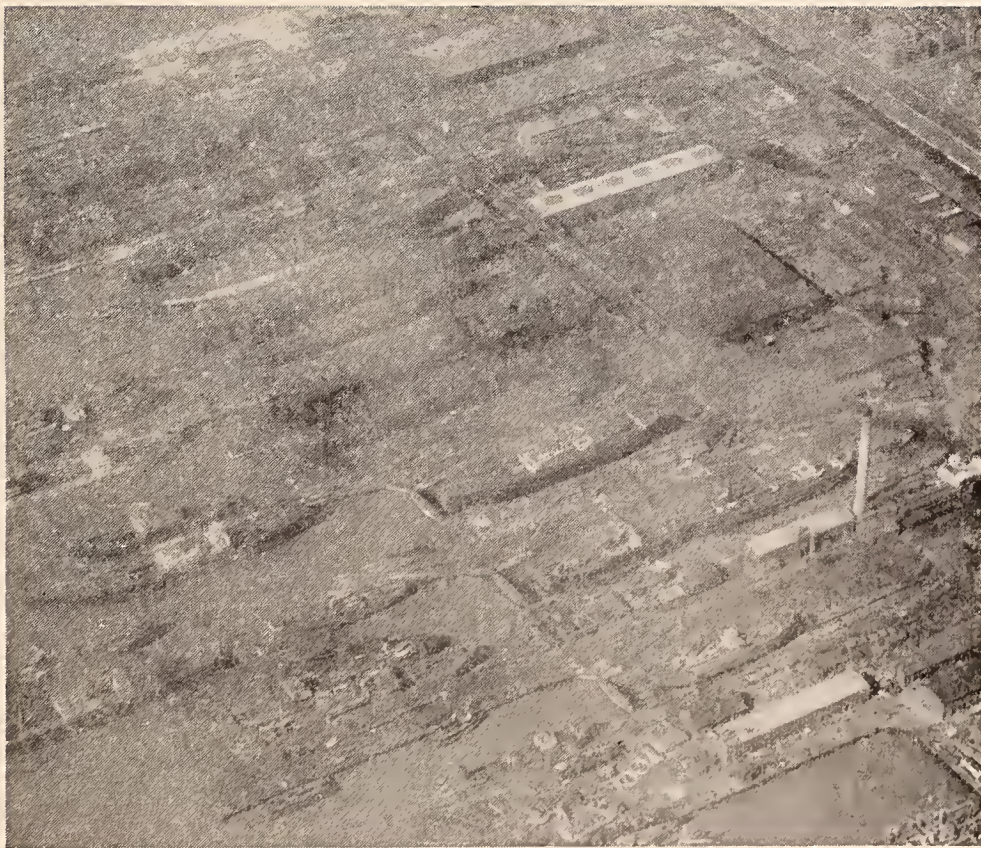
Economic changes, better facilities for education, the tendency everywhere to broaden the sphere of women's activity, have brought a change in public opinion. Virginia women first entered the business world as untrained assistants in the offices of certain insurance companies of Richmond which had a reputation for solidarity and conservatism. Later, they appeared as trained stenographers. Gradually other fields opened to them. The World War hastened the change by calling women into industries of all kinds.

In 1918, the ancient College of William and Mary established a new priority in Virginia when it opened its doors to women. After attempting vainly for a decade to establish coordination at the University of Virginia, women students for the first time registered in the graduate and professional departments of that institution⁹ in the session of 1920-21.

The men of the Old Dominion have watched with some anxiety the transition which has taken place. They have often opposed the changes. A Virginia woman who has been intimately associated with women in industry has rightly observed on this point: "Let it be said, after all, in common fairness that the Virginia man's attitude towards the problematic new woman advancing upon him has in it elements of insight and chivalry which our women will do well to ponder as they reach for a wider life; * * * It cannot be entirely unfortunate that, in this time of woman's bewildering emancipation, one section of the country shall steadily emphasize without over-emphasizing the value of that certain delicacy of femininity which, when all is said, remains one of the chief assets of women, of the new era as of the old."¹⁰

⁹Philip Alexander Bruce, *History of the University of Virginia*. Vol. V, 86-103.

¹⁰Orie Latham Hatcher, "The Virginia Men and the New Era for Women," *The Nation*. Vol. 106, pp. 650-652.



DOCKS AT NEWPORT NEWS

One of the greatest factors in transforming the social and economic life of Virginia was the development of the railroads. Virginia issued on March 8, 1827, her first charter to a railroad. Permission was given for the building of the thirty-two mile Winchester and Potomac Railroad from Winchester to Harpers Ferry, where connection was made with the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. By 1838, the State had issued bonds to aid in building seven railroad lines in Virginia. At that time, the Virginia Legislature, under the leadership of Alexander H. H. Stuart, decided upon a definite system of building railroads and provided a uniform law for their incorporation. By 1860, thirty years after the introduction of the locomotive, there were 1,350 miles of railroads in the State. The rapid increase in railroad building after 1838 is shown by the fact that the railroad mileage had grown from 147 in 1840 to 384 in 1850; and by 1860 there were 1,350 miles of railroads in operation in the Commonwealth. These figures show that Virginia, through State aid and local subscriptions to stock, had increased the mileage of her railroads more than three and one-half times during the decade preceding the war. The growth of railroads would have been even more rapid had it not been for the General Assembly's unfortunate attachment for the James River and Kanawha Canal scheme. There were, in 1860, fourteen railroads chartered by the State.¹¹

These roads were planned to bring the products of Virginia to her own ports and to connect with systems being developed in other states. The Petersburg Railroad from Petersburg at the head of Tidewater, to Weldon, North Carolina, made connections with a line to the southward through the Carolinas and Georgia. The Richmond and Danville joined railroads to the South further from the coast when the Confederate Government, during the war, practically forced

¹¹For a list of these railroads giving their respective dates of charter, locations, lengths and costs, see Imboden's Report, p. 20; and official reports of the Board of Public Works.

through a fifty-nine mile line from Danville to Greensboro. The Virginia and Tennessee road joined with the Southside railroad to Petersburg at Lynchburg and connected at Bristol with another southern line still further west, the East Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia road. The Virginia Central from Richmond to Covington was to be extended finally to the Ohio River. The produce of the valley and the coal of the Southwest would be brought by railroad lines to Alexandria, which was to become a rival of Baltimore. The extent of railroads in Virginia when war began may be seen from the map below.

The railroad companies offered great inducements to travel. The Virginia Central, for example, advertised a night train going north through Alexandria on which "The cars are furnished with the most improved NIGHT SEATS." The Norfolk and Petersburg Railroad tempted the people of Richmond with this notice: "Passengers by this route leave Richmond at 4:30 A. M., and breakfast in Petersburg at 6, reach Norfolk at 10:30, and land at Old Point or Hampton at 12 M., allowing ample time for all preliminary room arrangements and a SALT WATER BATH before dinner."

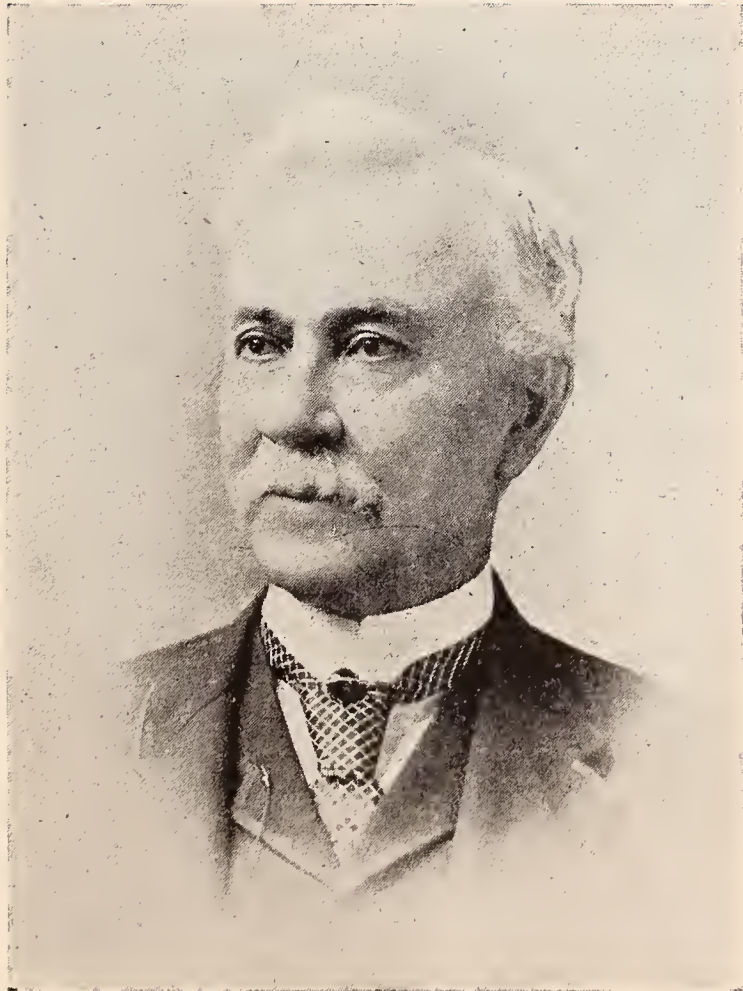
Since the newly invented Bessemer process of making cheap steel had not then come into general use, there were no steel rails on these roads. The iron rails had already begun to deteriorate by 1861. The lack of manufacturing facilities and the blockade prevented the substitution of new rails. Since the State was a great battleground of the war, a tremendous burden was placed on its railroads. In 1862, Governor Letcher recommended that the General Assembly should enact laws to prevent their further injury by reducing the excessive speed of trains. "Passenger trains now pass," he said, "at the speed of sixteen miles per hour, and freight trains at the speed of about twelve miles per hour. This speed should be reduced to ten miles per hour for passenger trains and eight miles per hour for freight trains, unless in case of great public necessity."

At the end of the war, the railroads and railroad facilities of all kinds were in a most dilapidated condition. The South-side Railroad between Lynchburg and Petersburg was so worn, and contained so many rotten ties, that trains going at very slow rates were sometimes derailed and ditched. General Stoneman's troops had destroyed its continuation, the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, in the spring of 1865. In 1867, Virginia sank into a state of suspended animation, and "U. S. Military District No. 1" marked the place where she had been. The uncertainty of the political future, and the utter destitution of the people, prevented for a while, the securing of capital for the rebuilding of railroads.

A new era in railroad building began when Virginia became herself again in 1870. It was made possible at that time through the efforts of Mathew F. Maury. He prepared and published in 1868 his first or *Preliminary Report* on the resources of Virginia called the *Physical Survey of Virginia*, a pamphlet of about ninety pages, in which he called the attention of Commodore Maury as a scientist, and as an authority which had not been exploited, and planned in a series of maps the railroad lines which were necessary to develop these resources. He also showed the tremendous possibilities of Hampton Roads as a great national seaport, nearer to the West and better fitted by nature and location than New York harbor to be a great gateway for commerce. The reputation of Commodore Maury as a scientist, and as an authority on commerce, gave this little report a wide circulation, and resulted in the bringing of much capital into the State for carrying his suggestions into execution.¹²

Between 1860 and 1870, only ninety-nine miles of railroads were built. But during the fifteen years after 1870, 981 miles

¹²An earlier and very valuable state geological survey was made during the years 1835-1841 by William Barton Rogers, then professor of Natural Philosophy and Chemistry at the College of William and Mary, and later a professor in the University of Virginia, and founder of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The State, however, did not take advantage of this report to develop its resources.



JOSEPH R. ANDERSON

were constructed. In 1885 there were thirty-two railroads in Virginia having an aggregate length of 2,430 miles. Even more striking were the improvement and consolidation of the old lines. During these fifteen years of progress the three roads which formed a continuous line from Petersburg to Bristol were consolidated into one efficient road, the Norfolk and Western. The Lynchburg and Danville Railroad was completed and joined with the roads between Lynchburg and Alexandria, thus bringing under control of one corporation, the Virginia Midland Railway Company, a line from north to south through the State. In 1886, this road passed into the hands of the Richmond and Danville Railroad Company.

During the '70s and '80s, three railroads in the Valley of Virginia were completed. These were leased by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company. They formed one continuous line from Winchester to Lexington, and gave a ready market in Baltimore to the produce of the Valley. (Before 1861 the Baltimore and Ohio had already gained a door into Virginia along the Winchester and Potomac Railroad, but the state legislature was very slow in allowing Baltimore to gain the trade of the rich section west of the Blue Ridge Mountains.) These three roads, together with the Winchester and Potomac, became known as the "Valley Railroad."

In 1882, a parallel line, the Shenandoah Valley Railroad, was completed from Hagerstown, Maryland, to Roanoke, Virginia, along the western base of the Blue Ridge. It was practically a branch of the Norfolk and Western and became eventually a part of that system. It not only furnished a direct route to the North through the Valley of Virginia but also made available to the manufacturers of the State a great store-house of mineral wealth.

While Baltimore was reaching out for the trade of the Valley, which she had coveted in vain for fifty years, she was capturing for herself at the other side of Virginia the rich counties of the Eastern Shore. By 1884, railroad lines leading south from that city had been consolidated and extended

down the center of the peninsula to Cape Charles. This road, the New York, Philadelphia and Norfolk Railroad (the "Nyp and N") has made the Eastern Shore of Virginia and Maryland a magnificent garden for the many great cities along its route. And it has helped to convert that region into the richest agricultural section in the United States. Direct freight connection with the cities on Hampton Roads is obtained through ferries and barges which transport passengers and long trains of cars across Chesapeake Bay.

On March 1, 1873, the Covington and Ohio Railroad¹³ completed its track across the Alleghany Mountains to the Big Sandy River. A few years later, in 1878, it was sold to a company headed by Collis P. Huntington, and its name was changed to the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad. The road was then extended from Richmond down the Peninsula to Newport News. This work was hurried to completion in time for the Yorktown celebration of 1881. Another evidence of cooperation in railroad activities was the building (1886) in Richmond of a "union depot of large and imposing dimensions." "This new departure in the right direction," as it was described at the time, was made by the Richmond and Petersburg Railroad and the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad.¹⁴

It was not until 1872 that the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad extended its line beyond Aquia Creek to form with the Alexandria and Washington Railroad an all-rail route from Richmond to Washington. And even in 1885 a traveler from Richmond to Washington passed over the tracks of five different railroad companies.

One of the most interesting of the purely local roads completed during this period was the Richmond and Alleghany Railroad. The road was formed by the purchase of the properties and franchises of the James River and Kanawha Canal Company, now vanquished after a long struggle, and the

¹³A consolidation (1868) of the Virginia Central and the Covington and Ohio.

¹⁴Imboden, p. 62.



DR. WALTER REED

Buchanan and Clifton Forge Railway Company. It followed the tow-path of the old canal as far as the latter had been completed, and joined the Chesapeake and Ohio at Clifton Forge in Alleghany County. It was later merged with that road.

It may be seen from this brief account that, during the fifteen years prior to 1885, the railroads extended their lines down the Peninsula, though the Eastern Shore, into the Valley of Virginia, and across the Piedmont region between Lynchburg and Danville. Alexandria was brought into connection with the road to Richmond. Other new routes were built or projected.

One of the most encouraging features of this period of railroad development was the breaking down of much of that economic isolation which was typified in the railroads, and which was one of the chief reasons for the War of 1861. At the outbreak of that war, rail communication to the North was very inadequate. In fact, with the exception of the Winchester and Potomac Railroad, (which was only thirty-two miles long in Virginia), no cars went north across the state line. The Virginia Central, which was the only road to the northwest, was being extended westward to the Ohio, but it had not at that time crossed the Alleghanies.

One may frequently read in the Richmond newspapers of 1860 such notices as this: "No mail from the North was received by the afternoon train yesterday" because of the delay of the boat, which brought the mail down from Washington to the railroad terminal at Aquia.

But even when new railroads were built across the boundary lines of the State, the trains on many Virginia roads could not run on their tracks because of difference in gauges of Northern and Southern roads, and even of those within the State itself. The Southern States had not adopted the standard gauge when it had become universal elsewhere. This unfortunate difference in gauge between most of the railroads south of the Ohio and the Potomac and north of them had for years been a source of endless inconvenience

and expense. On February 2, 1886, representatives of Southern railroads met in Atlanta and decided on a program for changing the gauge of 13,128 miles of track in the South, which included nearly all the roads in that section of the country. Of this total, 981 miles were in Virginia. It was decided that the entire change should be made on June 1, 1886, between 3:30 a. m. and 4 p. m., during which time the running of all trains would be suspended. Exception was made in the case of a few roads—none of which were in Virginia—which were to be changed on the day before. Some roads had been preparing for this emergency several years. In order that the final work might be completed as rapidly as possible, everything was made ready for shifting the one line of rail to the proper place. All the spikes on the inside of that rail which were not absolutely necessary were drawn; the ties were smoothed and spikes driven along the new inside line of the rail. On June 1, the number of working men was doubled and the work was finished by the time scheduled. The few remaining inside spikes were pulled; the rail was drawn in to its proper place against the newly driven spikes, and was held in place by spikes driven on the outside. The importance of this achievement cannot be overestimated. Railroads had ceased to be sectional.

This expansion in railroad building was accomplished only through great sacrifices by the people of Virginia. Prior to 1860, when a railroad company was chartered in the Commonwealth, the state government, practically without exception, agreed to become a stockholder to the extent of three-fifths of the capital stock. State bonds were issued to secure the money required and the State's interests were carefully guarded by the Board of Public Works, which supervised all internal improvement companies in which the state government was interested. Millions of dollars were also subscribed by individuals and by local governments. The public debt which had been incurred in this manner was so burdensome after 1865 that the Constitution of 1869 did not permit the State to

borrow money for aiding internal improvements, or appropriate money for their aid. The State therefore, could not render direct aid to the railroads.

A few of the companies were able to secure money and to reconstruct their lines within a few years. Those companies which were not so fortunate were aided by the Commonwealth. It is recorded, for example, that the General Assembly by act of March 1, 1876, gave to the Chesapeake and Ohio Company the property of the Covington and Ohio Railroad, a state work which had cost Virginia \$3,206,461.83; and the Assembly by act of February 14, 1867 "transferred" the common stock owned by the State in the Manassas Gap Company to the Orange, Alexandria and Manassas Company—a loss to the State of \$2,280,000.¹⁵

In most cases the Commonwealth sold its interests at a sacrifice or relinquished her prior rights in favor of new creditors. Some of these transactions were absolutely necessary for the economic recovery of the State; others seemed to have been more liberal than was justifiable and were subject to much adverse criticism. The most notorious example of this occurred in connection with the Atlantic, Mississippi, and Ohio Railroad. By the act of June 17, 1870, authorizing the formation of that company out of the four corporations whose lines extended more than 400 miles from Norfolk across the State line at Bristol, Virginia, exchanged her claim on the component lines, amounting to \$5,191,404.41, for \$5,000 in cash, and a second mortgage of \$4,000,000, provided the first mortgage did not exceed \$15,000,000. This arrangement enabled the new company to borrow money and to put the road into good condition. But poor financial management¹⁶ soon brought it into bankruptcy and it was sold to Philadelphia financiers. In this transaction, which was arranged by the president of the Atlantic, Mississippi and Ohio, the Legislature passed a bill, of which H. H. Riddleberger was patron,

¹⁵Imboden, p. 76.

¹⁶Imboden, p. 24.

authorizing the Board of Public Works to sell its mortgage lien of \$4,000,000 for \$500,000—all that was saved out of the State's claim to \$5,191,000 in round numbers.¹⁷ There was some compensation, however, even for this disgraceful transaction.

The company was reorganized as the Norfolk and Western on May 3, 1881. Within the next four years, it had added the seventy-four mile New River branch line to give an outlet to the Great Pocahontas coal region of Tazewell County, and had about half completed a fifty-four mile road to the Cripple Creek iron region in Pulaski, Wythe and Smythe counties. The company had also gained control of the Shenandoah Valley Railroad, which was completed in 1882. This road made connection with the Norfolk and Western at Roanoke. So skillfully was this railroad managed that mining and manufacturing cities and towns sprang up and flourished along its way, and farming became more diversified and more profitable. The Chesapeake and Ohio is another great coal-carrying road. Recently the Virginian, a third great line, has been built across the State from West Virginia, past Roanoke and the vicinity of Lynchburg, to Norfolk.

Virginia now (1923) has eight great trunk lines within her borders. Most of them have resulted from consolidations which were already taking place during the '80s. They have become parts of great national systems.

There were 4,609 miles of steam railroads in Virginia in 1921, an increase of 2,179 miles since 1885. The total length in 1921 of track in the State including second, third, and fourth tracks and yard-tracks and sidings was 7,701 miles. The growth of railroads may be seen from the following figures and maps:

Year, 1840, number of miles in operation (single track), 147; 1850, 384; 1860, 1,350; 1870, 1,419; 1880, 1,893; 1885, 2,430; 1920, 4,609.

The Commonwealth of Virginia has for nearly a century

¹⁷Manuscript minutes and other documents of the State Board of Public Works.

owned about one-sixth of the voting capital of the Richmond, Fredricksburg, and Potomac Railroad Company, of the par value of \$275,200, to which has been added, from time to time, dividend obligations of the said company of the par value of \$602,200, and having a present estimated total market value of over \$2,000,000, which stock and dividend obligations, together with all dividends paid thereon, have, by the General Assembly of Virginia, been constituted a part of the sinking fund of the State for the purpose of purchasing and retiring the outstanding bonds of the Commonwealth.¹⁸

This is now the only railroad in which the State is a stockholder. It is a connecting link between great competing lines north of the Potomac and those south of Richmond, and serves as a common highway for through trains of competing lines. In order that this road may be impartial and neutral in dealing with these roads, and that the State's interests may not be put in jeopardy, it has been the policy of the State to prevent the road from merging with any of the competing lines.¹⁹

Besides its stock in this railroad, the Commonwealth owns an interest in five turnpike companies.²⁰ It is the purpose of the State, however, to incorporate these works in the State Highway System as soon as possible.

¹⁸Annual Report of the State Corporation Commission, 1922, p. 100.

¹⁹*Ibid*, p. 100.

²⁰*Ibid*, p. 103.

CHAPTER XVII

SOME SOCIAL AND ECONOMICAL FACTORS (Continued)

The social and industrial changes in Virginia which resulted from war and readjustment caused a marked increase in the population of the cities. The railroad development has brought into existence mining, manufacturing and commercial towns and cities and has accelerated the growth of others. The cities of Roanoke, Newport News, Clifton Forge, and the towns of Pocahontas, Pulaski, Covington, Cape Charles, Alta Vista, Victoria, and others owe their existence chiefly to railroads which have been completed since 1880.

Roanoke was a village of 669 people in 1880. Within ten years a city of 16,159 had come into being. In 1920, it was the fourth city of Virginia in size, with a population of 50,842 inhabitants. During the '80s, Newport News on Hampton Roads became a great shipping point. Ship construction was later begun by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, which is now one of the largest private plants of its kind in the world. Many of the best fighting craft in the United States Navy has been made by that company. Newport News has a population of 35,596 and is rapidly growing.

In 1881 Pocahontas was a laurel thicket. Now it is a thriving mining town. Clifton Forge, Covington, and Pulaski have large plants for manufacturing iron and other products. Similar changes have taken place in other towns too numerous to mention.

Railroads have made available the great mineral resources of Virginia. The following report of the State Geologist, Prof. Thomas L. Watson, of the University of Virginia,

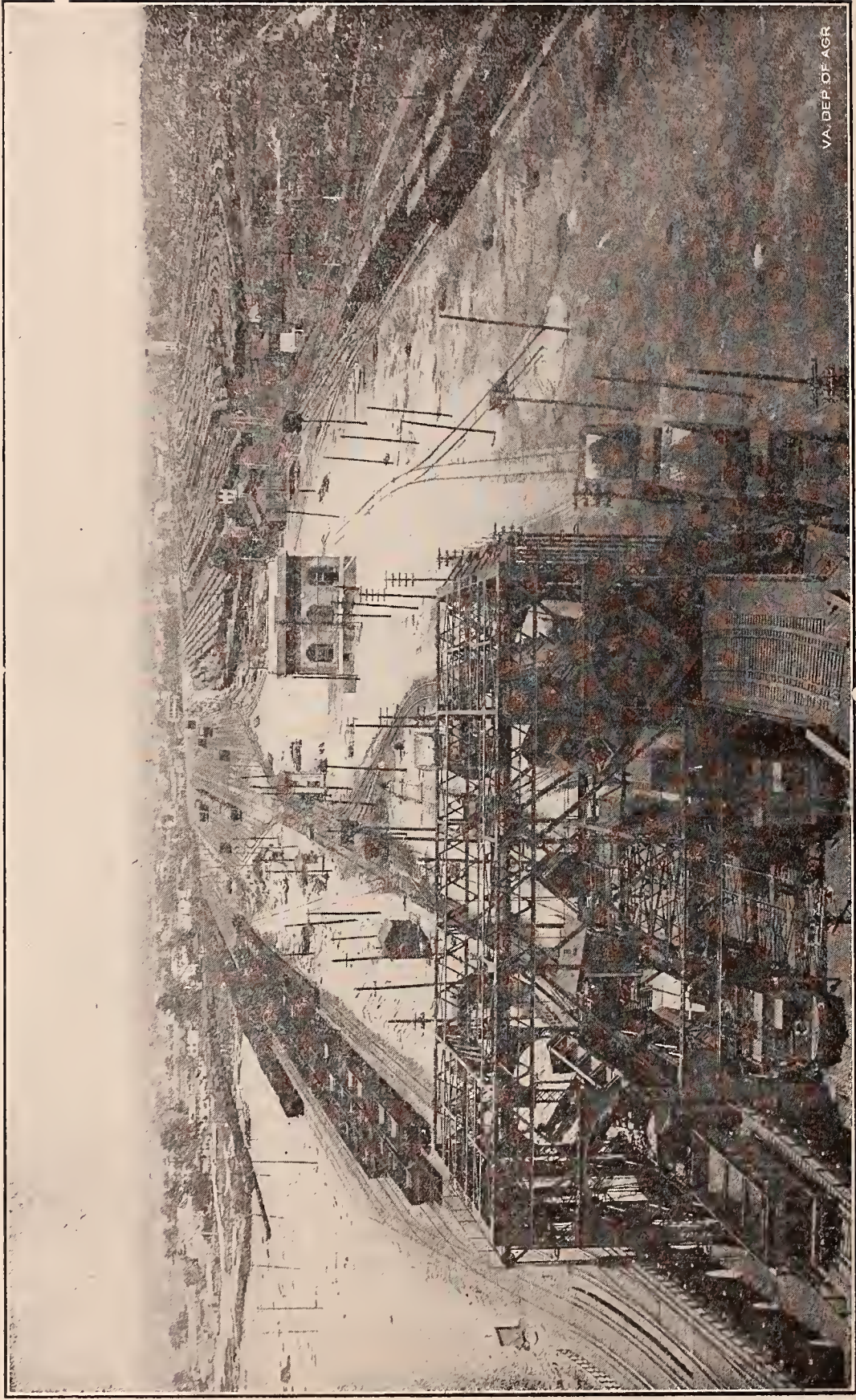
gives an excellent view of the location of these resources and the value of their products in 1920:

“Virginia is possessed of an abundance and variety of mineral materials, many of which have been worked since early colonial days, especially coal, iron ores and brick clays. In 1920, the latest year for which mineral statistics collected by the State Geological Survey are available, the total value of all mineral products mined and quarried in Virginia was \$82,662,945. This represents an increase of \$32,584,290 in value, or nearly 40 per cent over the year of 1919. The total value of the 1919 production of mineral products mined and quarried in Virginia was \$50,078,655.

“Mining of iron ore in Virginia in 1609 by the Jamestown colonists was the first iron ore mined in the United States. The commercial deposits of iron ore in Virginia are confined to the Piedmont and Appalachian provinces. The production of iron ores in Virginia in 1920 amounted to 320,109 long tons, valued at \$1,227,601. The valuation of the production of pig iron in Virginia for the same year was \$16,086,946.

“Virginia has always held an important position as a producer of manganese ores, which are derived chiefly from three sections of the State; (1) The eastern Valley counties, extending along the northwest foot of the Blue Ridge from Warren County on the north to Smyth County on the southwest, inclusive; (2) many of the counties in western Virginia, including Tazewell, Bland, Giles, Craig, Bath, Shenandoah and Frederick; and (3) a group of counties in the Piedmont province, of which Campbell is the principal producer. The production of manganese ores in Virginia for 1920 was valued at \$73,929.

“Virginia has long held the position of first producer of pyrite (iron sulphide used in the manufacture of sulphuric acid) among pyrite-producing States in the United States. Commercial pyrite occurs in Buckingham, Louisa, Prince, William, Stafford, and Spotsylvania counties, and mines are opened in each county. The pyrite mines of Louisa and Prince



LAMBERT'S POINT
Terminal Norfolk and Western Railway Co. 3,000 Cars Pocahontas Coal Awaiting Vessels

William counties are the largest ones in the United States. Pyrrhotite, magnetic pyrite, used for the same purpose as pyrite occurs in abundance in Carroll County, and is extensively mined at Monarat for use in acid making at Pulaski. Only one of the several mines that have produced large tonnages of ore for acid-making reported a production in 1920.

“Gold occurs and has been mined in Fauquier, Stafford, Culpeper, Orange, Spotsylvania, Louisa, Fluvanna, Goochland, and Buckingham counties. Gold mining in the State dates from the year 1831, and from 1831 to 1850 the production was reasonably steady, the annual value being between \$50,000 and \$100,000. At present the production is small, but considerable activity is now being manifested in the mines of this belt, which should yield steady and profitable returns if properly managed.

“Copper ores are found in Halifax, Charlotte, Warren, Fauquier, Rappahannock, Madison, Page, Greene, Albemarle, Buckingham, Floyd, Carroll, and Grayson counties. The principal area in Virginia that has produced copper ores is the Virgilina district, which includes parts of Halifax and Charlotte counties. No production of either gold or copper was reported in 1920.

“Lead mining in Virginia dates back more than 150 years, and the old lead mines at Austinville, Wythe county, were the first to be worked. Mining of zinc ores in the State dates from the opening of the mines at Bertha, Wythe county, in 1879. The production of lead and zinc in Virginia, which in 1916 amounted to nearly \$700,000 in value has been increased during recent years by the output from the Holladay and Allah Cooper mines in Spotsylvania County.

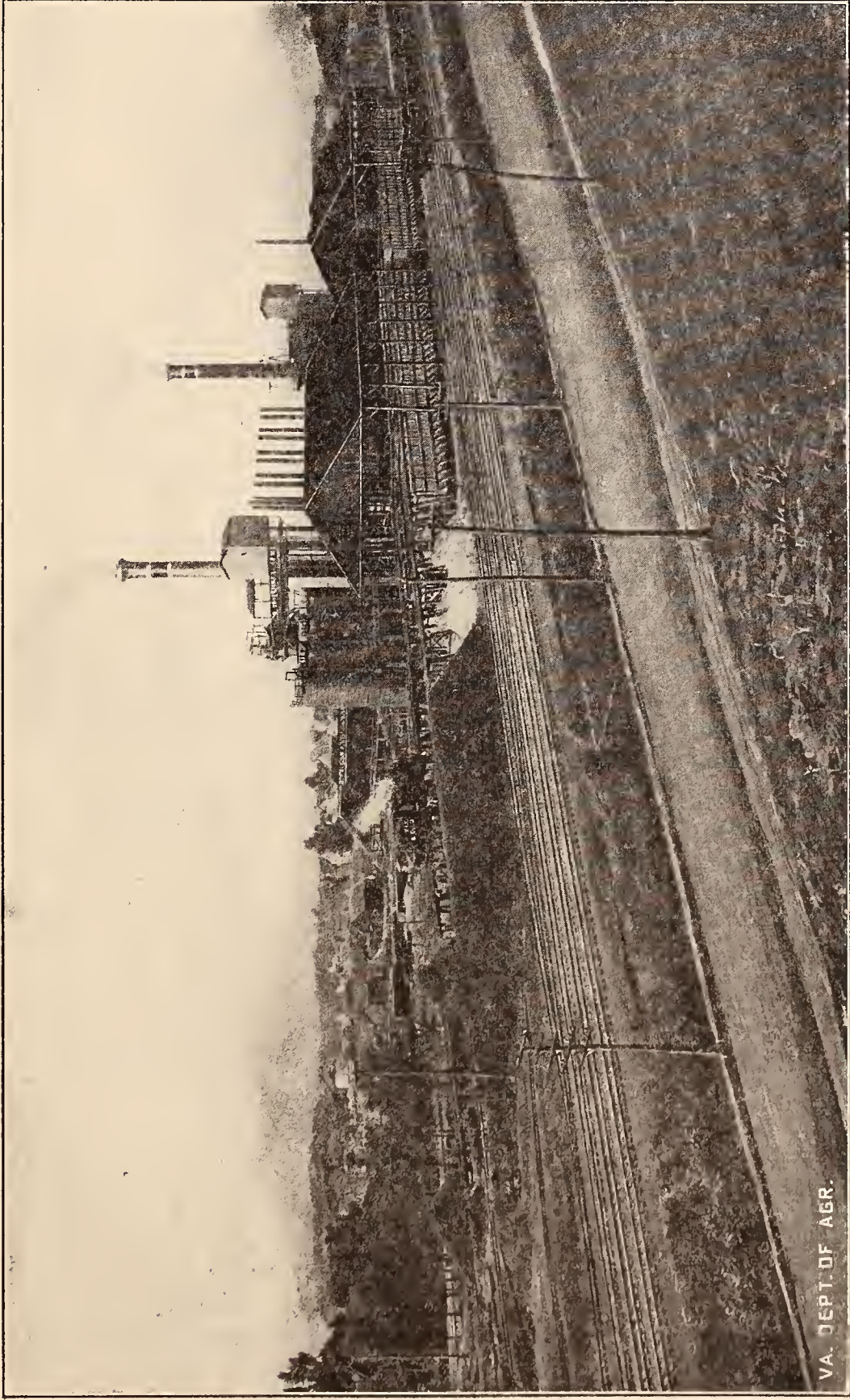
“Of the minerals mined in Virginia, coal is the most important both from the standpoint of quantity and value. In 1920 the production in the State amounted to 11,378,606 short tons, valued at \$45,446,465. The production of coke for the same year amounted to 714,980 short tons, valued at \$6,324,578. Virginia takes rank among the principal coal-producing

States in the United States because of the extensive coal fields in the southwest part of the State, which include a part or all of the following counties: Tazewell, Russell, Scott, Dickenson, Buchanan, Wise, and Lee. Coal is also produced in Montgomery and Pulaski counties, and deposits are known in Augusta, Botetourt, Bland, and Wythe counties. In addition to these an important coal area, and the only one adjacent to Tidewater on the Atlantic slope of the United States, is the Richmond Coal Basin, which covers parts of the following five counties; Henrico, Chesterfield, Powhatan, Goochland and Amelia. The coals of this basin represent a good grade of bituminous fuel which has been mined quite extensively at several localities on the east side of the basin.

“The clays of Virginia show great variety, are widely distributed, and are suitable for many commercial purposes. Almost every county in Virginia contains clay suitable for the manufacture of common brick, and, in most cases, the deposits are of such character that common brick of the best quality can be made. The total value of clay products in Virginia in 1920 was \$3,467,105.

“The production of stone has been an important industry in the State for many years, and the product of some varieties, especially granite, has been used in many notable structures. The stone industry for 1920 was fifth in importance among those based on the mineral wealth of the State. The production of stone in Virginia for 1920, including granite, limestone, sandstone, basalt, and slate, was valued at \$2,047,675.

“The mineral waters of Virginia are an important source of revenue in the State. Virginia has a large number of spring resorts and a great variety and abundance of well-known commercial waters. Indeed, Virginia is par excellence a mineral springs State, occupying among the South Atlantic States the same position that New York does in the North Atlantic section. Virginia is second only to New York in the number of springs that are utilized commercially and exceeds New York in the number of resorts. The total sales of water from the



IRON FURNACE, ROANOKE

mineral springs in Virginia in 1920, exclusive of water sold for soft drinks, amounted to 1,248,382 gallons, valued at \$147,600.

“Other mineral products produced in Virginia in 1917 and their valuations are tabulated below (later data is not available):

Lime	\$2,201,724
Marl (calcareous)	143,373
Mica	65,500
Millstones and chasers.....	34,676
Sand and gravel.....	1,133,279
Talc and soapstone.....	729,767
Miscellaneous (including barytes, cement emery, gems and precious stones, gypsum, ilmenite, lead and zinc pigments, purite, rutile and salt).....	3,532,727” ¹

With the development of transportation facilities and of mining, there was a marked increase in manufacturing and commerce, and a corresponding growth of cities.

At the outbreak of the War for Southern Independence, Virginia was painfully conscious of its dependence upon Northern factories and ships. Slavery, and the self-sufficient plantation system, stifled all business but agriculture and a few simple handicrafts. The Commonwealth possessed, however, some manufacturing establishments which were very successful, and was beginning to establish direct commercial relations with foreign countries. At the outbreak of the war, Richmond, a city of 37,910 inhabitants, possessed iron works (The Old Dominion Iron and Nail Works and the Tredegar Company) established during the eighteen thirties; flour mills of more than national fame (the Haxall-Crenshaw Company

¹Report from *Handbook of Virginia*, 1923. Published by the Department of Agriculture and Immigration of the State of Virginia, compiled by George W. Koerner, Commissioner, pp. 17-20. For a full and able account of geology and mineral resources of Virginia, see reports of Thomas L. Watson.

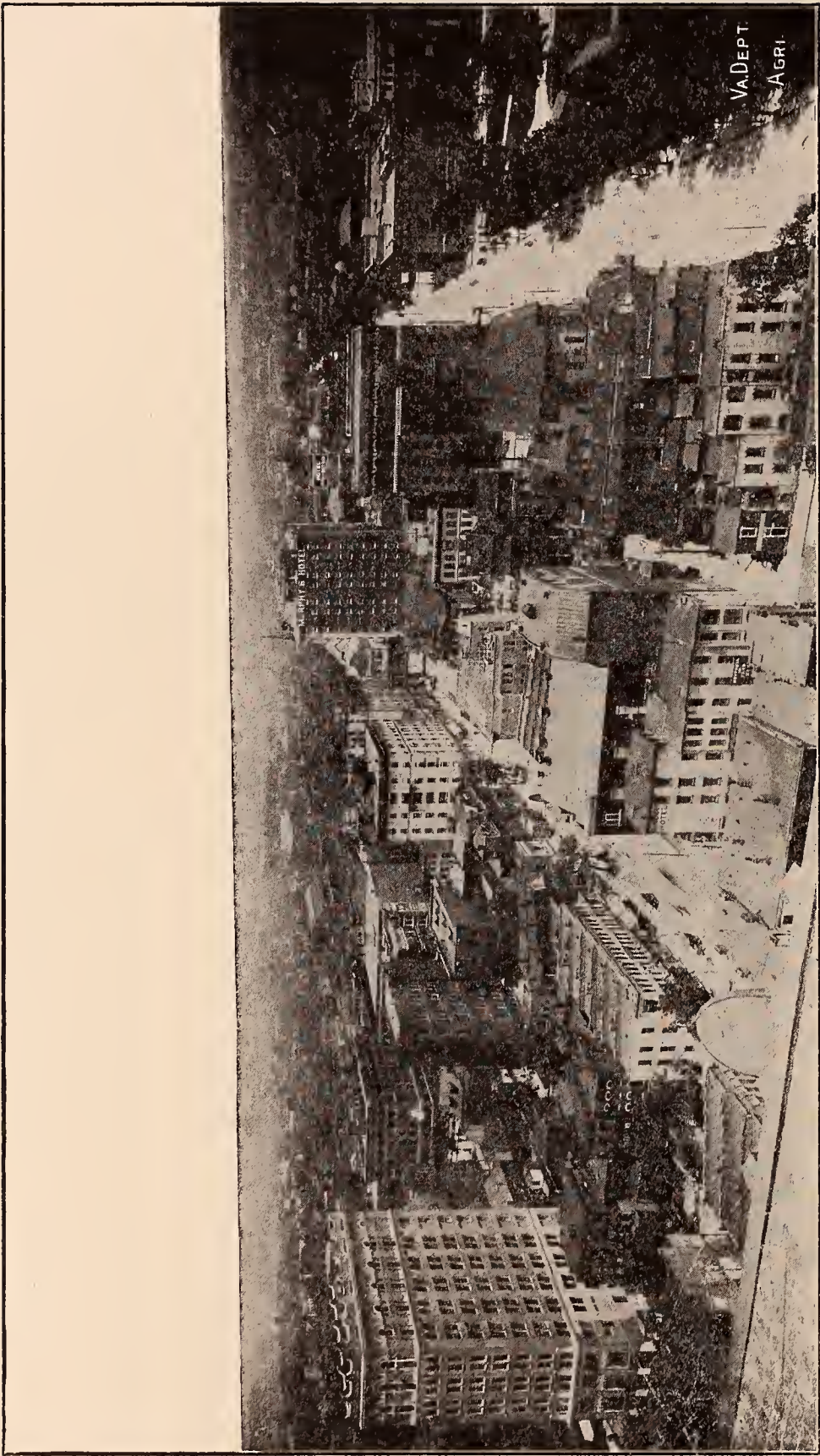
established in 1809 and the Gallego mills); soap factory dating from 1804 (Peter J. Crew and Co.); cotton mills established in the eighteen thirties and forties (the Old Dominion Cotton Mills and the Marshall Manufacturing Company); tobacco, and other factories of lesser fame.²

Ante bellum newspapers of Virginia contain many references to a conscious attempt on the part of the people of the State to become economically independent. The *Richmond Dispatch* of January 11, 1860, notes with approval Senator Mason's appearance in the United States Senate dressed in a suit of clothes made in Virginia. Three days later, the paper carried the following advertisement: "*Hoop Skirts*, for the ladies—an indispensable article of apparel—are to be manufactured in this city, by Mrs. Strider, who has taken rooms on Pearl Street, between Main and Cary. Our lady readers, who are true as steel to the South, will be gratified to hear of this factory, and give the proprietress their cordial support."

Flour shipped from Virginia was in great demand in Brazil on account of its excellent quality, and its capacity of withstanding the heat of the tropics, through which it passed to that country. In 1884, 249,787 barrels of flour were sent from Richmond to Brazil. Coffee was shipped to the United States in return, and shortly before the War of 1861 a line of packets linked Richmond and Rio. By 1868 the former city had become one of the greatest coffee ports in the United States. The aroma of coffee from nearby roasting and packing mills which now and then pervades the State Library in Capitol Square reminds one of this early exchange of flour and coffee reaching across the equator.

In 1848, the Assembly of Virginia incorporated the Norfolk and San Nazaire Navigation Company, which was to join the great central seaport of America with the French port that was the terminus of railroad lines leading into central

²Imboden, pp. 78-92.



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF RICHMOND

Europe. The act was amended and the stock of the company increased just after the War of 1861.³

Richmond, which, in 1860, was little more than a country town of 38,000 inhabitants, had grown into a city of over 63,600 by 1885. Its chief development in industry and trade after 1870 was in the tobacco business.⁴ Richmond received in 1885, 73,847,252 pounds of leaf tobacco. About half of this was shipped away and the remainder was manufactured. There were four cigarette factories, fifty cigar factories, twenty-six plants for stemming and rehandling, and thirty-six for manufacturing plug, chewing and smoking tobacco. The first cigarettes ever made by machinery were produced in Richmond by Major Lewis Ginter of that city. In the year, 1885, there were 179,699,870 cigarettes produced in Richmond. Of the \$93,067,408 of capital invested in the city's industries in 1919, more than a third was invested in plants for manufacturing tobacco. The total value of the product of all industries was \$156,724,322. Of this amount, the value of tobacco products equaled \$66,447,860. In addition to these manufacturing concerns, Richmond has large manufacturers of flour, one of the largest cedar wooden-ware factories in the country, and one of the largest locomotive works, the largest blotting paper factory, and many factories producing a wide variety of articles. Six railroad lines which enter the city, and boats on the James River at the head of tidewater, afford ample facilities for trade.

Similar progress could be shown along other lines of business such as wholesale and retail merchandising, insurance, banking, real estate, and many others. Nor does this brief account do justice to the increase in civic improvements. In the fall of 1879 a telephone exchange was installed and a city system was first inaugurated. The first successful electric

³Matthew F. Maury, *Physical Survey of Virginia* (1868).

⁴For tobacco culture in Virginia, and for statistics relating to its production and exportation, and the legislation regarding it since 1607, see articles by Robert L. Ragland and J. D. Imboden in *Report on Agriculture of the Tenth Census*.

street railway system in the world was installed in Richmond in 1887. The trial run was made in the night of November 7th. Electric motors soon replaced the mules of little horsepower and of less speed—except when they became frightened at the railroad locomotives on Broad Street and ran away with the cars.

Norfolk, in 1860, had a population of only 14,620, and Portsmouth of 9,496. These cities, though situated upon one of the most magnificent harbors in the world, were just beginning to come into their own as commercial centers. Located as these cities are on the northeastern corner of the great cotton-growing South, with railroads and canals radiating from them to all points in that region, it was but natural that they should soon have developed a great export trade in cotton. In 1858-59, only 6,174 bales of cotton were exported from the two ports. That number had grown to 32,941 during 1860-61. This increase was checked by war. By 1872 these ports had risen to the fifth, and in 1874, to the third rank, among American ports in the net annual receipts of cotton.

During 1874-75, 392,235 bales were received for shipment, and for the first time shipments were made direct to Europe—67,312 bales. Ten years later (1885) 484,459 bales were received in Norfolk and Portsmouth; and of this amount, 204,083 bales were exported direct to Europe.

Between 1865 and 1885, these cities developed a large trade in lumber, fertilizers, coal, vegetables, fish, crabs and oysters. Their business in these lines have been greatly increased and many manufacturing plants have been built. Eight trunk lines of railroads now have deep water terminals on Norfolk harbor, which, by 1920, had become the second port in the United States in the net tonnage of vessels entering and clearing in foreign trade—10,382,000 tons. It still remains one of the world's greatest cotton ports (384,824 bales in 1920) and has taken first rank as a tobacco port (207,713,172 pounds in 1920.) Norfolk and Portsmouth have grown from small towns in 1860 to cities of 115,777 and 54,387 inhabitants respectively



FIRST FACTORY TO MANUFACTURE CIGARETTES BY MACHINERY

in 1920. They are still growing rapidly. Norfolk in 1919 contained 207 industrial plants capitalized at \$22,516,307, the value of whose products amounted to \$29,587,662.

Petersburg, like Richmond, is a great tobacco market and manufacturing center, and like Norfolk, is within easy reach of the Southern cotton fields. In 1885, five cotton manufacturing companies with an aggregate of 26,554 spindles were in operation in the city. It has also developed a large peanut market. There are many factories for packing peanuts and for manufacturing products from them. The Seward Company operates the largest trunk factory in the world. Mills for the making of cotton fabrics and yarns, lumber products, flour, silk and other things are located there. Danville is the largest loose leaf bright tobacco market in the world. It has also established large cotton and other mills. Lynchburg is one of the wealthiest cities for its size in the land. Its shoe and candy industries are perhaps its most noted enterprises. It is also a large tobacco and apple market.

Suffolk is a railroad center at the head of navigation on the Nansemond River, and is a great peanut market. Charlottesville has one of the most successful woolen mills in the United States and is a large apple market. Farmville and South Boston are tobacco centers. Towns throughout the State have manufacturing plants which produce a wide variety of household articles, farming implements, vehicles, etc., which formerly were bought without the State. The value of Virginia's manufactures increased from \$108,600,000 in 1910 to \$650,000,000 in 1920.

The growth of the population of the chief cities in the Commonwealth may be seen from the following table:

	1860	1880	1900	1920
Alexandria	12,652	13,659	14,528	18,060
Danville	3,463 (1870)	7,526	16,520	21,539

	1860	1880	1900	1920
Lynchburg	6,853	15,959	18,891	30,070
Newport News			19,635	35,596
Norfolk	14,620	21,966	46,624	115,777
Petersburg	18,266	21,656	21,810	31,012
Portsmouth	9,496	11,390	17,427	54,387
Richmond	37,910	63,600	85,050	171,667
Roanoke		669	21,495	50,842

The following is a table of the population in 1920 of the other principal towns and cities of the State:

Bristol, Va. Tenn.....	14,776
Bristol, Va.....	6,729
Charlottesville	10,688
Clifton Forge	6,164
Covington	5,623
Fredericksburg	5,882
Hampton	6,138
Harrisonburg	5,875
Pulaski	5,282
South Norfolk	7,724
Staunton	10,623
Suffolk	9,123
Winchester	6,882

The cities have gradually gained on the rural population. The proportion of the population of Virginia living in places of 2,500 or more increased from 18.3 per cent in 1900 to 23.1 per cent in 1910, and to 29.2 per cent in 1920. Between one-half and one-third of the people of the Commonwealth now live in cities, or other incorporated places of 2,500 or more inhabitants. The following table from the Fourteenth Census gives in figures the story of this change during the last twenty years:

URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION: 1920, 1910 AND 1900.

CLASS OF PLACES.	1920		1910		1900		Per Cent of Total Population.		
	Number of places.	Popula- tion.	Number of places.	Popula- tion.	Number of places.	Popula- tion.	1920	1910	1900
Total population.....	.....	2,309,187	.....	2,061,612	.....	1,854,184	100.0	100.0	100.0
Urban territory.....	39	673,984	32	476,529	27	340,067	29.2	23.1	18.3
Cities and towns of—									
100,000 inhabitants or more.....	2	287,444	1	127,628	1	85,050	12.4	6.2	4.6
50,000 to 100,000 inhabitants.....	2	105,229	1	67,452	1	46,624	4.6	3.3	2.5
25,000 to 50,000 inhabitants.....	3	96,678	3	97,558	7	130,306	4.2	4.7	7.0
10,000 to 25,000 inhabitants.....	5	67,639	6	95,532	6	38,261	2.9	1.8	2.1
5,000 to 10,000 inhabitants.....	9	58,694	6	36,764	12	39,826	2.5	2.5	2.1
2,500 to 5,000 inhabitants.....	18	58,300	15	51,595					
Rural territory.....	164	1,635,203	159	1,585,083	128	1,514,117	70.8	76.9	81.7
Cities and towns of less than 2,500 inhabitants		120,783		113,016		84,703	5.2	5.5	4.6
Other rural territory.....		1,514,420		1,472,067		1,429,414	65.6	71.4	77.1

Virginia has grown in population from 1,512,565 in 1880 to 2,309,187 in 1920. The table below shows this increase:

POPULATION OF VIRGINIA: 1880 TO 1920.

CENSUS YEAR.	Population.	Increase Over Preceding Census.		Per cent of increase for the United States.
		Number.	Per cent.	
1920	2,309,187	247,575	12.0	14.9
1910	2,061,612	207,428	11.2	21.0
1900	1,854,184	198,204	12.0	20.7
1890	1,655,980	143,415	9.5	25.5
1880	1,512,565	287,402	23.5	30.1

The population has also increased in density. The total land area of the State is 40,262 square miles.⁵ The average number of inhabitants to the quare mile in 1920 was 57.4 as against 51.2 in 1910, and 46.1 in 1900.

Only 1.3 per cent of Virginia's population in 1920 was foreign born. The percentage of negroes to the total population has become less each decade. During the twenty years from 1900 to 1920 the percentage has decreased from 35.6 to 29.9.

It may be readily seen from these figures that, in spite of the growth of her cities and of her manufactures and commerce, Virginia is still essentially a rural Commonwealth. Farming is her greatest industry and upon it her prosperity in every other line is based.

The chief developments in agriculture since 1860 have been the introduction of free labor, the establishment of the State Department of Agriculture and Immigration, the breaking up of large farms into smaller ones, the coming of the tenant farmer, more diversified agriculture, new staple crops, more

⁵Virginia has 100 counties and 20 independent cities. Bland County was formed in 1861 from parts of Giles, Tazewell, and Wythe counties. Dickenson was formed in 1880 from Buchanan, Russell and Wise counties. In 1920, Alexandria County changed its name to "Arlington" County.

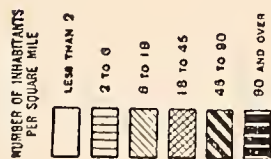
Rural Population Is Defined as That Residing Outside of Incorporated Places Having 2,500 Inhabitants or More

[illegible]

NUMBER OF INHABITANTS
PER SQUARE MILE

LESS THAN 2
2 TO 6
6 TO 19
19 TO 45
45 TO 90
90 AND OVER

CLARKE
FREDERICK
ERICK
LOUDBON
FAIRFAX
PRINCE GEORGE
LAQUER
HARRIS
SHENANDOAH
HARRIS
PAGE
HANNOK
ROCKMAY
MAISON
CULPEPER
STAFFORD
KING GEORGE
WESTMORELAND
NORTHUMBERLAND
ACONAC
LANCASTER
MIDDLESEX
MATHES
GLOUCESTER
NORTHAMPTON
ELIZABETH CITY
SURREY
BURY
JOHNSTON
BUSSEX
SOUTHAMPTON
NORFOLK
PRINCESS ANNE
NORFOLK
BRUNSWICK
WICK
MECKLENBURG
BURRO
LUNEN
BURL
PITTSBURGH
VANIA
HALIFAX
MATTOX
AMHERST
BUCKINGHAM
POW
HATAN
CHESTER
FIELD
GEORGE
JOHNSTON
NOTT
DOUGLAS
CUMBERLAND
MATTOX
APPO
CAMPBELL
CHARLOTTE
FRANKLIN
FLOYD
PATRICK
HENRY
GRAYSON
WASHINGTON
SCOTT
WISSE
RUSSELL
BUCHANAN
TAYLOR
ELAND
PULASKI
WYTHE
SMYTH
DICKENSON
BOON
LACONIA
GOMERY
OILES
DIVISION
BETHESDA
ROCKMAY
NELSON
ALBEMARLE
LOUISA
CAROLINE
ESSEX
RICHMOND
WINDHAM
NEW HAMPSHIRE
KING AND QUEEN
MIDDLESEX
MATHES
GLOUCESTER
NORTHAMPTON
ELIZABETH CITY
SURREY
BURY
JOHNSTON
BUSSEX
SOUTHAMPTON
NORFOLK
BRUNSWICK
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GRAYSON
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BUCHANAN
TAYLOR
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PULASKI
WYTHE
SMYTH
DICKENSON
BOON
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GOMERY
OILES
DIVISION
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ROCKMAY
NELSON
ALBEMARLE
LOUISA
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scientific farming, cooperation among farmers in buying and marketing, and the breaking down of rural isolation.

An account has already been given of the great change that came with the breaking up of the old social and economic system in the State. Farms and farm values declined and those who owned the land were reduced to dire straights. Some gave up their farms; others with much suffering lived through that trying period, sold part of their land and adjusted themselves to new conditions. The cheapness of land was a great boon to many who had been almost landless before and whose lower standard of living spared them the acute suffering of those who had possessed a larger portion of the soil. Plantations, therefore, were broken up, and, in many cases, passed into the hands of new owners. In 1860, there were 57,188 farms in Virginia. By 1885 the number had increased to 118,517; and in 1920 there were 186,242 farms. The farms in 1920 were largely managed by their owners, of whom there were 136,363. There were 2,134 managers and 47,745 tenants. Of course the last number does not take into consideration the large number of tenants who live on their own little farms and rent a part of a neighboring farm "on shares." The average size of a Virginia farm in 1923 was 99.7 acres. The average value per acre of the land in Virginia increased from \$20.24 in 1910 to \$40.75 in 1920. The tenant farmer has not been always a blessing where land has been cheap since they have used their leased farms as stepping stones to farms of their own and have often left them in a worse condition than that in which they found them. However, the system as a whole was a God-send to those without land. In a large measure it helped to solve the labor question, and in that way aided the owners in saving much of the wreckage of their fortunes. The State will be fortunate if it can further the change of its tenants into proprietors.

In 1877 a Department of Agriculture and Immigration was created by the General Assembly and a Commissioner of Agriculture was appointed. A Board of Agriculture and Im-

migration was created in 1888. As early as 1871, Virginia began her policy of protecting the farmers from inferior fertilizers. The law then enacted has been made more effective from time to time. The Department of Agriculture and Immigration now has divisions of Chemistry, Botany and Seed Testing, Agricultural Statistics, and of Marketing. It has been active in bringing in desirable immigrants from the northern and western parts of the United States.⁶ A year book and monthly bulletins are distributed and farmers are aided in many ways through the several divisions of the Department.

The Federal Agricultural Statistician for Virginia, Mr. Henry M. Taylor made the following estimates of the crops for 1922:

“The total value of the important crops in order of rank is as follows: Corn \$42,116,000, tobacco \$37,620,000, hay \$19,520,000, wheat \$12,658,000, white (Irish) potatoes \$10,780,000, apples \$7,524,000, sweet potatoes \$5,403,000, peanuts \$4,290,000, and cotton \$2,744,000. According to value per acre the leading crops are, tobacco \$180.00, sweet potatoes \$117.45, sorghum for syrup \$79.90, white potatoes \$69.55, cotton \$51.75, peanuts \$33.00, corn \$22.12, barley \$22.00, hay \$22.00, buckwheat \$15.99, and wheat \$15.75.

“The great variety of crops grown in Virginia is shown by these percentages: The acreage of corn was 41.9 per cent of the total number of acres in cultivation; hay, 21.4 per cent; wheat, 18.3 per cent; tobacco, 4.6 per cent; oats, 3.6 per cent; white potatoes, 3.4 per cent; peanuts, 2.9 per cent; cotton, 1.15 per cent; sweet potatoes, 1.01 per cent; rye, 0.88 per cent; buckwheat, 0.37 per cent; sorghum for syrup, 0.29 per cent, and barley, 0.20 per cent. In addition to the above, a considerable acreage, for which no estimate is made, is devoted to fruits

⁶At first an attempt was made to secure settlers from Great Britain and northern Europe. But the State could not offer inducements that would compete successfully with those offered by Canada and other regions.

and truck crops. Virginia is one of the leading States in the variety of agricultural products grown.'''

The Albemarle pippins and other Virginia apples have long been famous in the markets of the world. But only with the recent inauguration of cold storage plants, modern methods of spraying, pruning trees, and of packing and marketing have apples become a large staple crop. Peanut culture did not assume importance until after 1865. Trucking and dairying have developed with the improved transportation and marketing facilities. Virginia now (1923) ranks first in the production of early Irish potatoes, third in tobacco, fourth in peanuts, and fourth in apples. Virginia leads all the South Atlantic States in milk production (110,942,113 gallons in 1919); has more cow-testing associations than any Southern state; and more pure bred horses, sheep and beef and dairy cattle than any other South Atlantic state. Census figures show that Virginia in 1922 was increasing her annual yield of corn, oats, Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, and hay faster than any other Southern state east of the Mississippi.⁸ In 1922 the land of Virginia produced crops worth 62 per cent more per acre than the average for the United States. The State could claim one of the strongest Farmers' Unions, one of the strongest Farm Bureaus, and some of the most successful young people's club work in the South. This account of progress should not obscure the fact that the farmer has not yet attained his highest prosperity. In no other business under the sun are there more possibilities for development than in agriculture. Chemists, physicists, biologists, and economists have each opened new avenues to wonderful possibilities in methods of production and distribution. And the inventors have been making country homes less lonely. A revolution in farming is already well under way.

The agents of this revolution in the State are the Depart-

⁷Department of Agriculture *Year Book* 1923, p. 105.

⁸*Year Book*, Department of Agriculture and Immigration of Virginia, 1923, p. 91.

ment of Agriculture, the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Hampton Institute, the Agricultural High Schools which are being built in every county, county demonstrators, experiment stations, agricultural journals, and cooperative associations. The most important development since 1860 in the business of farming has been the organization by the farmers of cooperative marketing associations. Only through these organizations can the farmer hope to escape from bondage to those from whom he buys and to those to whom he sells. Farmers have always found it difficult to organize. Only when faced with ruin did they do it. During the period of the World War, the farmers shared the inflated prices with the rest of the world. But when war ended, the prices of farm products fell until they had in many instances gone below the pre-war level and even below the cost of production. In 1921 the State Commissioner of Agriculture Mr. G. W. Koiner wrote:

“The price of corn in 1920 was only 15 per cent above 1914, and today is 26 per cent less. This is true of other commodities as well; the 1920 tobacco crop was sold at 50 per cent below cost of production, yet the manufactured product is selling today approximately at war prices; hides are selling below pre-war prices, yet harness and shoes are selling for double pre-war prices; wool sells for about 20 per cent less than pre-war prices, yet clothing costs twice as much. In fact almost everything the farmer must buy cost about double what it did before the war, and everything he is selling is at pre-war prices and less.

“These conditions cannot be expected to continue, already the rural population of our country is about 2,000,000 less than the urban. The new census shows that in some of the counties in the richest agricultural States the number of farm owners has decreased 14 per cent and the number of farm tenants increased 27 per cent.⁹

⁹Annual Report of the State Board of Agriculture, 1921. (Richmond, 1922) p. 7.

RURAL POPULATION.



These figures can only outline the picture of suffering and ruin which faced the farmers. There was but one way out. They were directed into that way by an address by Commissioner Konier, "To the Virginia Tobacco Warehouseman and the Business Public," which was published in the *Richmond Times Dispatch* of September 9, 1920. An editorial in the same issue of that paper seconded Mr. Konier's advice. Both articles advised the farmers to hold their crops for a better market, to find out the cause for low prices, and to formulate a scheme for preventing such conditions in the future. The Commissioner in his monthly bulletins kept the question of cooperative marketing before the people and he was ably seconded by the *Times Dispatch* and other papers. The farmers in desperation heeded this counsel. Within two years a momentous change had come. Thousands of farmers had pledged themselves to cooperate. They were fortunate in having as an example the Eastern Shore of Virginia Produce Exchange, "one of the oldest and most successful marketing organizations in the world." This association marketed sweet and Irish potatoes, strawberries, tomatoes, and cabbages, which were produced in Northampton and Accomac counties in large quantities. It was chiefly responsible for converting a relatively poor agricultural region into one of the richest in the country. In 1923, it marketed \$19,000,000 worth of products for the two counties. The following is a brief summary of the cooperative movement in 1923 given by the director of the Division of Markets of the Department of Agriculture, Mr. J. H. Meek: "Associations organized in Virginia during the past couple of years and yet in the process of being born, have enabled producers to receive many hundreds of thousand dollars they would not have received had these associations not been in existence. One of the foremost of these is the Tobacco Growers' Cooperative Association, which is now marketing the bulk of the tobacco produced in Virginia, North and South Carolina, at prices that are very advantageous to the producers. Some of the

other associations now functioning are the Maryland-Virginia Milk Producers' Association, the Valley Milk Producers' Association, Richmond Milk Producers' Association, Peanut Growers' Association, which operates in both Virginia and North Carolina, Southern Produce Exchange, Southwest Virginia Produce Exchange, Virginia Sheep and Wool Growers' Association, and eighteen cooperative Live Stock Marketing Associations. The poultry and fruit producers are now getting ready to market their products cooperatively. Virginians have not only learned to pattern after the wonderful system for marketing in the great West, but they are organizing on much sounder and efficient basis, as they are profiting by the mistakes that naturally would be made in bringing about these great changes in marketing when they were first started."¹⁰

The Peanut Growers' Association in 1922 (the year after organization) secured the field sales manager of the Sun-Maid Raisin Growers of Fresno, California, to take charge of the sales and advertising activities of the association. It is composed of both Virginia and North Carolina planters.

"A complete sales organization has been installed with contracts in every market in the United States and Canada, and a movement is on foot to market peanuts in pound packages through the medium of retail grocers of the United States. This will enable the housewives of America to purchase a pound of peanuts at a reasonable price, and, if it proves successful, it will undoubtedly be one of the foremost steps taken in the history of the peanut industry since its inception." This statement plainly shows the influence of western ideas. Besides caring for the purchasing and sales of produce these associations are of great benefit in forcing the farmers to grade and to standardize their products, and in aiding them in improving their means of growing and handling those products. They have fostered a professional spirit and have aided in breaking down rural isolation by creating closer relations between farmers.

¹⁰Virginia Department Agriculture *Year Book*, 1923, p. 87.

Other factors are lessening the distances between homes in the country and between the country and the town. Chief among these are the shrinkage in the size of farms, the recent introduction of rural delivery of mail, public school houses, telephones, good roads, and automobiles. The automobile has greatly diminished the loneliness of the farms. In 1906, when automobiles were first licensed in Virginia, there were only 626 in the State. Within the next year their number had more than doubled. There were 3,680 of these horseless vehicles in 1909. Ten years later (1919) there were 94,000. On November 5, 1923, 222,431 annual licenses were issued and the State was receiving between two and a half and three million dollars in license taxes on them.¹¹

The author can well remember the first automobiles that appeared in his community in Prince Edward County. They inspired the citizens with wonder and their horses with terror. They were not popular with the masses. There is a member of the state legislature, the owner of a store in a country town, who refused to deal with a traveling salesman who drove a car, since it frightened the horses of his customers. He now has a car himself, and so have many of those customers. Even the horses have become reconciled. Only a few years ago a country church yard on Sunday was filled with horses and vehicles. Today cars are parked where horses used to be tied. It has enabled the farmers to meet together or to go to town for business or for pleasure without inconvenience and loss of time.

Many new pleasures and conveniences have been added to country life. Labor-saving devices have lessened the drudgery in the field and in the home. Country homes are being made more convenient and more comfortable, and the time may not be distant when those that live on the farms will have all the conveniences of electrical power and lights, heat and running water which their city neighbors enjoy. They will also have rural libraries, hospitals and community centers.

¹¹The figures were kindly furnished me by Mr. James M. Hayes, Jr., Chief Clerk of the Secretary of the Commonwealth from the books in his office.

CHAPTER XVIII

LITERATURE AND EDUCATION

The great changes that have taken place in every phase of Virginia life since 1860 have just begun to be pictured in history and in fiction. Ante-bellum literature was for the most part political and religious in nature and reflects the controversial nature of that period.

The *Southern Literary Messenger*, which was published in Richmond, provided means for literary expression that attracted wide attention. It ended its thirty years of existence as a war victim in 1864. John R. Thompson, a Virginia poet of high order, and at one time editor of the *Messenger*, gave as the two chief causes for the lack of literary effort in ante-bellum Virginia, the close touch with English literary classics which inhibited the demand for native literature, and "the morbid desire of her sons for political distinction."¹

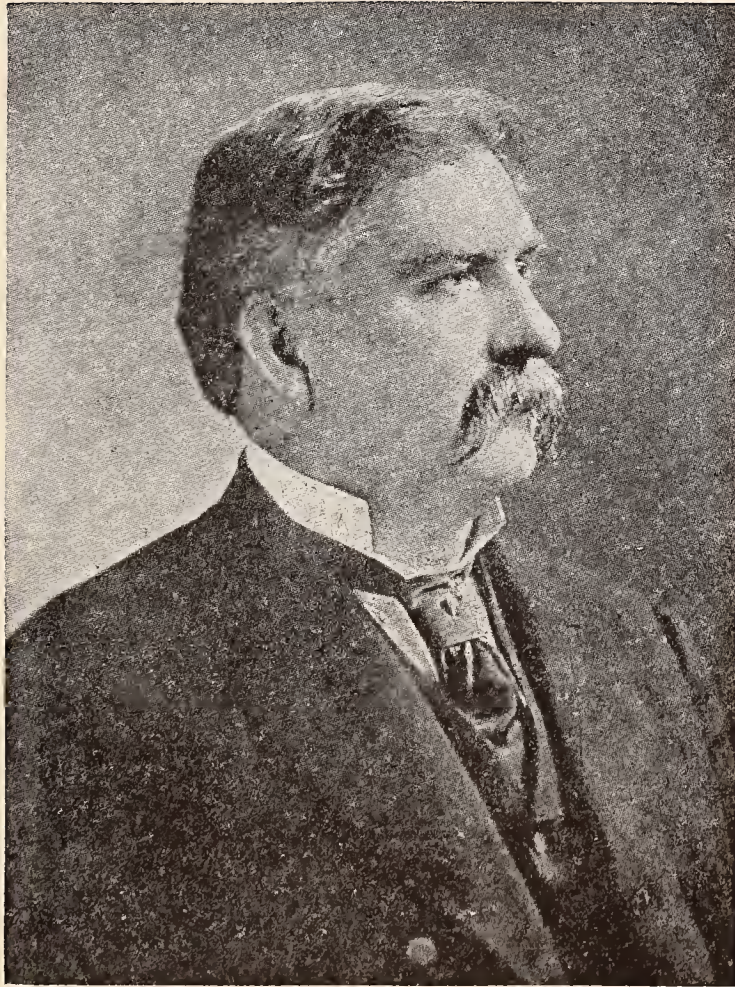
The neglect of popular education, the widely scattered population, and the lack of cities also helped to make Virginia a literary desert.

Virginia furnished to the Confederacy fully half of its outstanding military leaders, the Confederate Capital, and a great battle ground for its armies. It was but natural, therefore, that the war and its leaders should have called forth many writers to describe these great figures and stirring scenes. The most noted contemporary history of the war was E. A. Pollard's *Southern History of the War*. Recollections and diaries followed in large numbers. Lee, Jackson, Johnston, Stuart and Ashby had their biographers.

¹John R. Thompson, *Education and Literature in Virginia*, an address in 1850 before the Literary Societies of Washington College, Richmond, 1850.



EDGAR ALLAN POE



ARMISTEAD C. GORDON

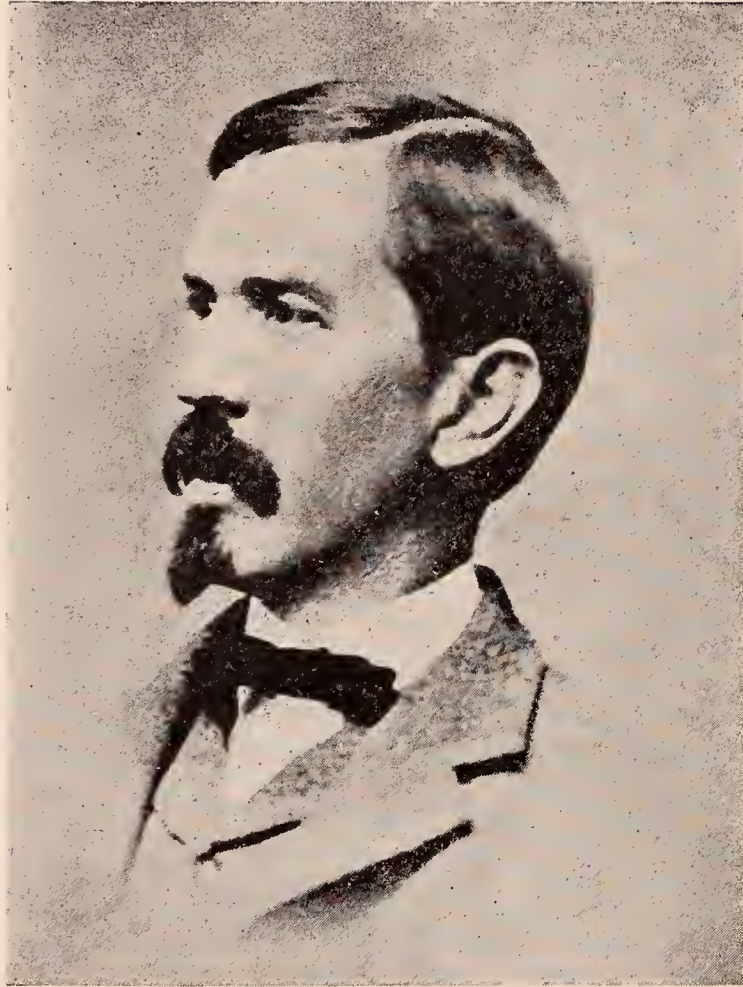


JOHN R. THOMPSON

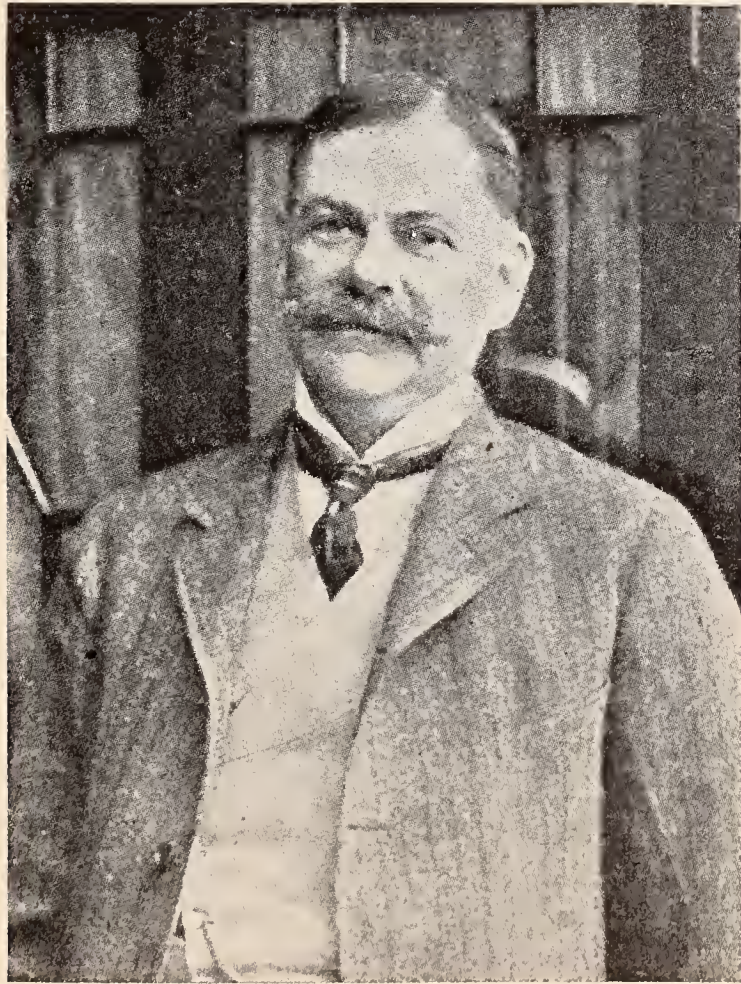
One young Virginian who fought by Stuart's side, John Esten Cooke, had published before the war *The Virginia Comedians* one of his best novels, it dealt with the Colonial period. His close association with one of the most romantic and chivalrous characters in American history throughout the war, gave to him the plots for his later novels and the type for his heroes. His *Surry of Eagle's Nest* and many other stirring romances, received their inspiration from the scenes through which he had passed. George Cary Eggleston, a brother of Edward Eggleston of *The Hoosier Schoolmaster* fame, was born in Indiana of Virginia parentage. Shortly before the war he came to Richmond to practice law. In 1861, he chose the gray and served throughout the war. His *A Rebel's Recollections*, *Master of Warlock*, a novel, his essay in the *Atlantic Monthly*,² *The Old Regime in the Old Dominion* and other works portray the war and ante-bellum period. Mrs. Burton Harrison, who lived in those days, pictures the life of the women of that time. *The Belhaven Tales* are especially good. Two short stories, the *Crow's Nest* and *Una and King David* are among the best tales of the war. Thomas Nelson Page's stories of the war, *Marse Chan*, *Meh Lady*, and others are literary gems. They are written in the quaint Negro dialect of middle Virginia and picture the plantation system of the Black Belt at its best. Page was twelve years old at the end of the war. He had seen the crumbling of the old regime and grew into manhood during the grinding era of poverty and humiliation. His memory of the old regime, bathed in all the glory of youthful imagination, contrasted sharply with the hard realities of his impressionable youth.

It was natural that ante-bellum Virginia home life and plantation scenes should have been the inspiration of his short stories of inimitable dialect, of his novels, and of his essays. He vividly portrays the early transition stages from the old regime to the new. It may be said that he introduced the romantic period in Virginia fiction, a period in which Virginians

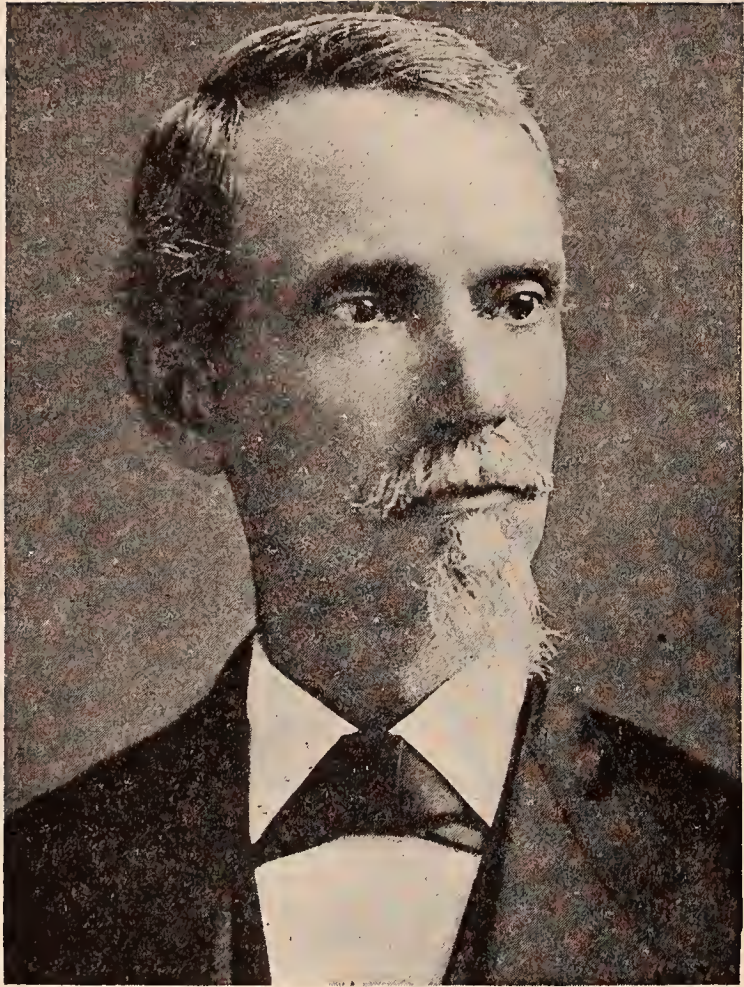
²Vol. 36, pp. 603-616.



JOHN ESTEN COOKE



THOMAS NELSON PAGE



GEORGE W. BAGBY

allowed their imaginations to wander in the golden past while they kept their faces to the gray future, and put their hands to the plow as, with stout hearts, they began to rebuild the Old Commonwealth. The pictures which he painted are true of the social order which he represents. They throw a flood of light upon a people, simple in their living, cultured, hospitable, kind and free from convention. It is true that his colors are somewhat too brilliant at times, and that he portrays the ideal conditions as he knew them as a boy—conditions which did not always prevail. Other writers, following his lead, have distorted the picture and have brought about a reaction against the romantic point of view.

The chief among the poets of the war and early post-war era was John R. Thompson. Among the best known of his poems are *Lee to the Rear*, *The Burial of Latané*, *Ashby*, and *Music in Camp*. Thompson deserves to be remembered as an editor and a lecturer as well as a poet. Ill health followed him throughout the later years of his life and struck him down while literary editor of the *New York Evening Post*. James Barron Hope, Mrs. Margaret J. Preston, Father Abram J. Ryan and Father Tabb, also belong to this period.

Virginia owed much during her dark years of trouble to Dr. George W. Bagby, a humorist of no mean ability, who, on the platform and in the press, brought smiles that were as rare as gold in those days.³

The romantic period in Virginia literature may be said to have ended about 1900. Ellen Glasgow's first novel, *The Descendant*, published in 1897, marked the beginning of the change. A new Virginia had arisen, democratic, national, and industrial in outlook, freed in part from poverty and debased politics, progressive and confident of the future. Social and economic problems enter into the plots of Miss Glasgow's

³J. S. Patton, *Poems of John R. Thompson*, New York, 1920 (Contains a good memoir of Thompson); John Owen Beaty's *Life of John Esten Cooke*; J. L. King's *Life of George W. Bagby*, not yet published; and Jay Broadus Hubbell, *Virginia Life in Fiction* (1922), brief but useful.



ELLEN GLASGOW



MARY JOHNSTON



JAMES BRANCH CABELL

books. The business man and the poor white come into their own. Miss Mary Johnston, who had made colonial Virginia a popular field for writers of fiction, turned to historical novels relating to the Civil War which pictured war without its romance. Thomas Nelson Page's later works show the same influence. Since 1913, there has been a revolt against the old regime. The spirit of that revolt may be seen in the later writings of Miss Johnston and Miss Glasgow, Amélie Rives (Princess Troubetzkoy) and James Branch Cabell. "There is no established order; it is always upset in time, either for good or evil. It never abides, for change is the law." These words of one of Mr. Cabell's characters voices the restlessness of a new era.

Philip Alexander Bruce, in an address in 1881 (*The Social History of Virginia*) predicted a revival of literary effort, and of the writing of history in the State, with the economic revival of the country. His prophecy was realized. During the '80s and '90s a revival in historical research came when Alexander Brown published his *Genesis of the United States* and *The First Republic in America*, and when Philip Alexander Bruce began publishing his *Economic, Institutional, and Social Histories of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century*, which placed him in the first rank among economic historians. Lyon G. Tyler has done excellent work in Virginia colonial history. R. A. Brock, W. G. Stanard, Mrs. W. G. Stanard, H. R. McIlwaine, H. J. Eckenrode, Earl G. Swem, Morgan P. Robinson, D. R. Anderson, and other historical investigators, have greatly broadened the field of historical knowledge of Virginia.

This brief account includes only some of the more prominent of Virginia authors and historical investigators. Many others have written biographies, autobiographies, works of fiction, and histories of real merit. Some, like Woodrow Wilson and William P. Trent, have been adopted by other States.

There have also been natives of Virginia who have distinguished themselves in other fields of endeavor both at



LADY ASTOR

home and abroad. Among these may be mentioned: Basil L. Gildersleeve of the University of Virginia, and later of Johns Hopkins University, known throughout the world as a teacher and as a classical scholar; two sculptors of high rank, Moses Ezekial and Edward Virginius Valentine; the foremost American pianist and composer, John Powell, who is preserving in his musical compositions the spirit of Old Virginia; and the first woman to become a member of the British Parliament, Nancy Langhorne, Lady Astor, a wise and liberal statesman.

Another phase of the literary revival in Virginia has been the revival of education after 1900. The movement began with a series of educational conferences which led to the formation in 1901 of the Southern Education Board. A campaign of educational propaganda was organized. In 1903, the Co-operative Education Association was proposed by five men who met at Murphy's Hotel in Richmond, to plan a better system of cooperation in educational affairs. They were, Mr. J. D. Eggleston, of Prince Edward County, President H. B. Frissell of Hampton Institute, Dr. S. C. Mitchell of Richmond College, and Dr. Robert Frazer of Warrenton. The Association was organized early in 1904, and in December of that year a campaign in the interest of better education was planned for May, 1905. Dr. Bruce R. Payne of the College of William and Mary filled the papers with educational propaganda and issued numerous pamphlets. One hundred of the most influential men of the State, including Governor Montague, made 300 addresses at 100 different meetings in ninety-four counties. This "May Campaign" had a tremendous effect in showing the people of the State their backwardness in public education.⁴ In 1906 the people elected as State Superintendent of Public Instruction Joseph D. Eggleston, the most efficient state superintendent since Ruffner. High schools were established—there were only forty-eight in 1890 and seventy-three in 1900. Progress along all lines was rapid

⁴Cornelius J. Heatwole, *A History of Education in Virginia*, New York, 1916.

and sure. Two new State Normal Schools were established, one at Harrisonburg in 1909, and the other at Radford in 1912. Clubs were formed among boys and among girls to encourage better crops, better poultry raising and better methods of canning. Close cooperation has been secured between the patrons and the teachers. Home economics is being taught; agricultural high schools are being built in every county; terms have been lengthened and standards have been raised; schools are better graded and better teachers are employed. Expansion in numbers has brought its perils, since there is a constant pressure on teachers and executives in the high schools to lower the grade of work to meet the standards of many who are unprepared or careless, and this pressure is reflected in the colleges. The great increase in the number of high schools, and in the number of their graduates, have in recent years taxed the resources of the colleges to the utmost. President Chandler, of the College of William and Mary, in an address before the Virginia Education Conference of 1923, stated that during the previous twenty years, there had been an increase of 50 per cent in the number of pupils enrolled in the public schools, 1,000 per cent increase in the value of school property, 66 per cent increase in the number of teachers, and 250 per cent increase in high school enrollment. High school enrollment had increased from almost none to 10,000.

The colleges had grown in size and expanded in the scope of their activities with equal rapidity. Randolph-Macon Woman's College in Lynchburg, which opened its doors in 1893, has become one of the foremost women's colleges in the South. West Hampton College for Women, a college for women coordinate with Richmond College, was organized in 1914.

The standards of the foremost colleges have been raised to meet the requirements of such organizations as the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

The University of Virginia, under the able leadership of its



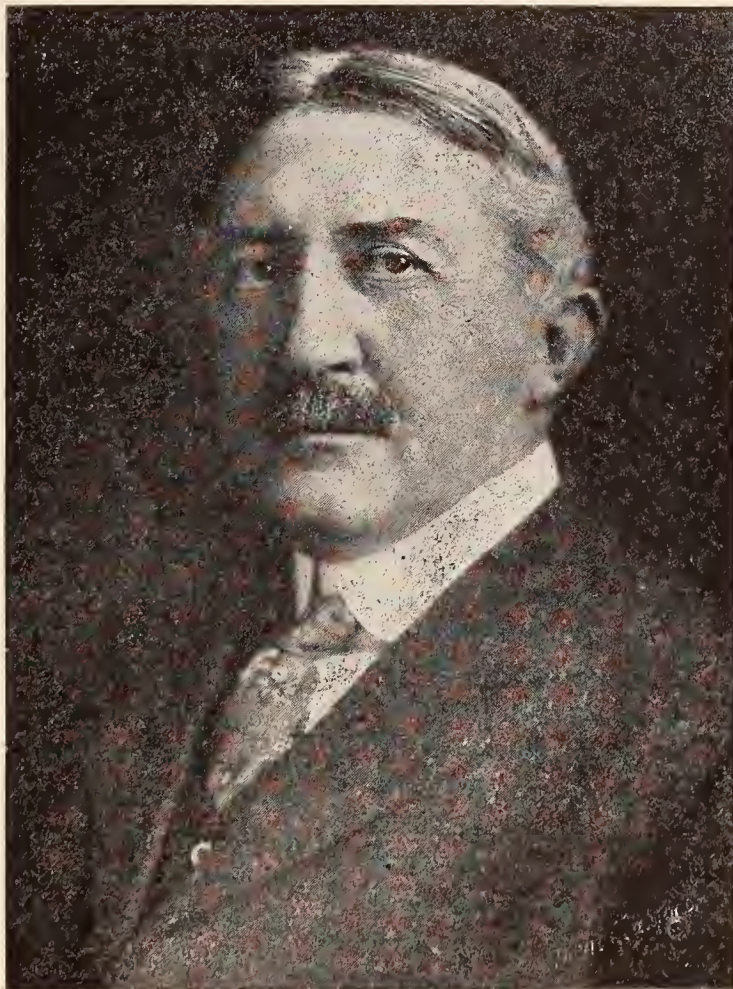
J. H. C. CHANDLER
President William and Mary College

first president, Dr. Edwin A. Alderman, has since 1904 trebled its corps of teachers. Its student body has grown from 662 to over 1,700. In 1919, an executive of unusual ability, Dr. J. A. C. Chandler, became president of the ancient College of William and Mary. In 1918, there were enrolled in the institution 107 men and twenty-four women (who were admitted for the first time in 1918). Five years later (1923) 464 men and 381 women had enrolled. In addition to these, there was in 1923 an enrollment of 713 in the summer quarter, and 666 students in extension classes (organized for the first time in Virginia at this College in 1919). Classes were being conducted in seven localities outside of Williamsburg. During those five years, the faculty had more than doubled. The Marshall-Wythe School of Government and Citizenship was organized in 1922 the better to promote ideals of public service.

Yet all this growth has endangered the standards of the colleges unless more funds are provided for their support. The crisis in these institutions is well described in an editorial of the *Richmond News Leader* of December 6, 1923, which comments as follows on an address delivered by the President of the University of Virginia:

"This," said President E. A. Alderman as he began his address before the alumni council last evening, "this is the only speech I propose to deliver during the next two years. Wherever I speak, this will be my message. If I am compelled to talk on Chinese porcelain, I shall say 'Chinese porcelain is a splendid adornment of any cultured home, but how can there be cultured homes unless the colleges are supported adequately?' and then I shall proceed with this same appeal. Thereupon, as his audience laughed at his hyperbole, he began a presentation that fairly staggered his hearers by the crisis it revealed in the state colleges and normal schools.

"He showed that with Texas barred from the comparison by its very bulk and wealth, and the eleven other Southern States considered, Virginia is next to the bottom in the per-



EDWIN A. ALDERMAN
President University of Virginia

centage of the tax dollar spent for higher education. Georgia, the only state that spends relatively less than Virginia, is just now debating very large expenditures for the state colleges. The Old Dominion devotes 6.2 cents of the tax dollar to higher education. North Carolina allows 14.6 cents. South Carolina appropriates 13.2 cents. There scarcely is a state college in this Commonwealth that has dormitories or laboratory space in any wise adequate to accommodate the students. At several of the schools many of the buildings are close to dilapidation. Yet the 39,000 students in the state colleges and institutions for the training of teachers in the South, Virginia has 5,800—a larger number than any other Southern State has.

“First in enrollment, next to last in the percentage of the tax-dollar devoted to higher education—could there be stranger evidence that the crisis is upon the Commonwealth? Could there be clearer proof that Virginia must maintain her standards and enlarge the facilities of the state colleges or else must reconcile herself to losing the primacy that was hers for a century?”

CHAPTER XIX

WORLD WAR AND ITS INFLUENCES

Many of the changes that we have recorded have been hastened by the World war. War never leaves a country as it finds it. The tremendous changes that followed 1865 have been mentioned. The War with Spain—in which an ex-Confederate General, Fitzhugh Lee, distinguished himself in the service of the United States, and in which another Virginian, Walter Reed, made possible the stamping out of the curse of yellow fever—gave to Virginia a new national outlook. In the War of 1917, a native of the old Commonwealth guided the nation as its chief executive and as the commander-in-chief of the armies and navy.

The War in Europe had affected conditions in Virginia before 1917. A town appeared on the James River near Petersburg and grew, within a few months, to be one of the largest cities in the State. This town, Hopewell, sprang up around the Dupont factories, which were making high explosives for European armies. This mushroom city, soon outgrew the police facilities of the local county authorities, and was for a time, until properly regulated and incorporated, as disorderly and lawless as some of the rapidly-growing gold-mining towns of the West had been in former days. Although the Armistice was followed by an exodus from the city, a thriving town remains, which promises to regain its former size.

When the United States entered the war, another city, Penniman, grew to large proportions on high explosives. It was located on the York River near Williamsburg. This city, with its homes, schools, churches, banks, and community centers, which were grouped about huge munition plants, has

now vanished into the cornfield out of which it arose. Near Penniman were the mine fields where acres of mines were assembled for use in the North Sea and elsewhere. At Seven Pines, near Richmond, there was a bag-loading plant for powder.

Another type of get-large-quick cities, which came with America's entry into the war, were military camps cities



WOODROW WILSON

of plain two-story wooden buildings lined with wall board. Their growth was even more rapid than that of the high explosives cities. Among the more important of these were, Camp Humphreys for army engineers near Alexandria, Camp Eustis on the James River near Williamsburg for artillery, Camp Stuart at Newport News for embarkation, Langley Field for aviators on Hampton Roads, and largest of all, Camp Lee on the old battlefield of Petersburg where army divisions were trained. The following is a characteristic picture of the building of an army camp:

“In June, 1917, the site of Camp Lee was typical of the Virginia countryside. Here and there was a farm, with its smooth, cultivated fields surrounding; a few hills broke the monotony of the stretches of underbrush. But on June 19th Camp Lee, the vision, the project, began to fade, and Camp Lee, the reality, came into existence. On the 25th of June 2,000 men were at work, and this number steadily increased, until, at the end of August, 14,500 workmen were busy completing the great cantonment. The layman who now sees the finished product of their hands does not understand the magnitude of the task which they have completed. The brush and woods were cleared; the swampland and stagnant pools were drained. Then roads were constructed, and 700 buildings erected. If Camp Lee were to be a city in terms of population, adequate provision had to be made to care for that great number of men. A perfect sewerage system was installed to safeguard the health of the city, and a water-system with a capacity of 3,000,000 gallons per day was perfected by the engineers. Then there were electric lights, telephone and telegraph facilities, a fire department—in fact, every detail which is necessarily associated with a healthful, well-organized community of 46,000 souls. And the greater wonder of all—Camp Lee was transformed from a wilderness into this municipal Utopia in three short months.

“The cost of building the camp was in the vicinity of \$8,000,000; the weekly pay-roll of the contractors alone amounted to \$300,000. Fifty million feet of lumber, 100 acres of wall-board, 500 tons, or twenty-five carloads, of nails, 500 miles of electric wiring, fifty miles of sewer and water pipe were necessary for the construction of the cantonment.”¹

The camp was built in the form of a J (as near the form of the letter U as the terrain would permit). In the center of the J were the chief Hostess House where the soldiers entertained their visiting friends; the Liberty Theatre; the

¹Roger Batchelder, *Camp Lee* (a brief handbook for soldiers) published by Small, Maynard & Company, Boston, 1918.

Camp Library, managed through the American Library Association, and the central huts of the Young Men's Christian Association, the Jewish Welfare, and the Knights of Columbus. The barracks were plain two-story wooden buildings, all alike.

This description would not be complete without mentioning an institution which was established when the soldiers from Europe began to return to the camps to be discharged



CAMP LEE

from service. It was the Camp Delousing Plant, through which the men from the trenches returned to civilization. In full view of what may be called the social center of Camp Lee, with its name stretched in huge letters across the top of the building, it stood as a witness to the efficient medical service of the Army and as a monument to the vileness of war.

Soon after the end of the conflict, the General Assembly of Virginia established a War History Commission under the direction of Dr. Arthur Kyle Davis. This Commission has collected much source material which will enable someone in the future to write an account of Virginia's part of the war, of her ready response to the call to arms; of the draft

and the drilling into shape of raw recruits; of conservation of resources and the long roll of drives—Liberty Bond drives, camp community service drives, and others; of the sweaters and socks that were knitted; of wheatless and meatless days; and of the work of heroic draft boards, who have not yet received their medals or citations. Those days have come and gone and life goes on as before—except that the bills of war are being paid.

War was its heroic as well as its hideous side. The record of the number of men in service from Virginia has not yet been completed, but it is estimated that these were about a 100,000. Record has already been obtained (November 21, 1923) of 1,187 honors conferred upon 773 Virginians, and the list is still incomplete.

The citations of three of these Virginians quoted below give a vivid picture of the nature of the service required of the men at the front and of the spirit in which that service was rendered: Fifer, Ursher Lee, of Weyers Cave, Virginia.

Pharmacist's mate, third class, Sixth Regiment, United States Medical Corp., Second Division.

Navy Distinguished Service Medal; Bouresches, Chateau-Thierry sector, France, June 6, 1918.

Citations: "For extraordinary conspicuous gallantry on June 6, 1918, during the capture of Bouresches, Chateau-Thierry sector, France. He dressed and evacuated the wounded from a wheat field swept by heavy artillery and machine-gun fire. At a time when the losses threatened the success of the operation his heroic conduct steadied the lines and spurred the attacking platoons on through barrage fire. Also on July 19, 1918, near Vierzy, France, he administered aid to wounded infantry troops as they advanced, taking the wounded into Vierzy under heavy shell fire and bringing back water and stretchers. He fearlessly ran along the line, exposing himself to sniper and machine-gun fire to direct prisoners to wounded men. Fifer was also commended for heroic conduct on October 8, 1918, in Champagne, France."

French Croix de Guerre with Gilt Star.

Citation: Similar to the American.

Cited by Division Commander: St. Etienne.

Citation: 'Displayed untiring energy and rare judgment and bravery in attending to wounded men on an advance of the line during the action near St. Etienne. He worked continually for two days and nights without rest and food, refusing to leave the line.'"²

Gregory, Earl Davis of Chase City, Mecklenburg County, Va., Sergeant, One Hundred and Sixteenth Infantry, Twenty-ninth Division. Son of William Jackson and Pearl Davis Gregory.

Congressional Medal of Honor: Bois de Consenvoye, Oct. 8, 1918.

Citation: "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty, in action with the enemy at Bois de Consenvoye, north of Verdun, France, October 8, 1918. With the remark, 'I will get them,' Sergeant Gregory seized a rifle and a trench mortar shell, which he used as a hand grenade, left his detachment of the trench mortar platoon, and, advancing ahead of the infantry, captured a machine gun and three of the enemy. Advancing still farther from the machine-gun nest, he captured a 7.5 centimeter, mountain howitzer, and, entering a dugout in the immediate vicinity single-handed, captured nineteen of the enemy."

French Croix de Guerre with Palm.

French Citation: "With the approbation of the Commander-in-Chief of the American E. F. in France, the Marshal of France, Commander-in-Chief of the French Armies, cites in the order of the army, Gregory, Earl D., Sergeant Headquarters Company, One Hundred and Sixteenth Infantry, October 8, 1918. Having picked up rifle and mortar shell he captured the machine gun and took three of the enemy prisoners; advancing again he captured a seven and five-

²The several citations, given at different times, were signed by Secretary Daniels, Pershing, Petain and others.

tenths centimeter mountain gun, and upon entering a dugout in the vicinity he captured nineteen enemies.”—(Signed) Petain, Marshal of France.

Italian Croce di Guerra (War Cross).

Montenegrin Order of Merit Medal.

McCluer, Edwin Alexander, of Urbanna, Middlesex County, Va. Second Lieutenant, Three Hundred and Forty-Fourth Battery, Tank Corps. Son of Rev. E. B. McCluer, D. D.

Distinguished Service Cross; Jonville, September, 1918.

Citation: “For extraordinary heroism in action near Jonville, France, September 14, 1918. Commanding a reconnaissance patrol of three tanks, he put to rout a company of German infantry, four pieces of artillery, and destroyed eight machine guns. His action was eight kilometers in advance of our front lines.”

Oak Leaf Cluster; Bois de Montrebeau, September 28, 1918.

Citation: “For act of extraordinary heroism in action near Bois de Montrebeau, France, September 28, 1918: In the attack on the woods he led his tank patrol on foot through dense wooded territory and in the face of intense fire. He was two kilometers in advance of the infantry front line during this exploit.” (Oak Leaf Cluster is worn with Distinguished Service Cross.)^{*}

These men and others like them are now going about their day's work with little thought of yesterday, but with much concern for tomorrow.

During the sixty-two years pictured within this volume, Virginia has had to fight for her life and at times for her very soul. Whatever success may attend her citizens in the future, they should always hold in grateful memory the unflinching courage of their fathers and mothers who sacrificed, and saved, and labored to rebuild the Old Dominion.

^{*}Quoted from A. K. Davis, editor *Virginians of Distinguished Service in the World War*, Virginia War History Commission Publications, Source Volume 1, Richmond, 1923.





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